ERRATA troubling the Reader, which the Reader is desired to correct, (beliefs being charitable for some common infirmities of the Press, or a hasty Pen,) as follows,——

Page	Line	For	Read.
Ser. 16	35	Sight	Flight
22	16	——	Remedy, or Correction
23	34	——	Corpse
24	36	——	Digested
37	35	convictions	Corruptions
44	5	——	Temporal
58	19	——	Saweth with it
64	1	——	As well as

ERRATA troubling the ſenſe, which the Reader is deſired to correct, (beſides being charitable for ſome common infirmities of the Preſs, or a haſty Pen,) as follows,——

9 MY 72
MUS

Page	Line	For	Read.
Ser. 16	35	ſight	Fight
22	16	——	Remedy, or Correction
23	34	——	Goſpel
24	26	——	Digeſted
37	35	convictions	Corruptions
44	5	——	Temporal
58	19	——	Saweth with it
64	1	——	As well as

5

A

Practical Diſcourſe

Relating to the

GOSPEL-MINISTY.

Preach'd

By *Thomas Foxcroft*, A. M.

At 4

His Ordination to the Office

OF

Paſtor of a CHURCH in *Boſton*, on *Wedneſday*, *November* 20. 1717.

Publiſhed and Enlarged at the Urgent Requeſt of a Gentleman of his Auditory.

With a *Preface* by the Reverend

Mr. *Benjamin Wadſworth*,

Paſtor of the ſaid Church.

BOSTON:

Printed for *Nicholas Buttolph*, at his Shop at the lower end of Corn-Hill, 1718.

A

Practical Discourse

Relating to the

GOSPEL-MINISTRY.

Preach'd

By Thomas Foxcroft, A.M.

At

His Ordination in the Office

Pastor of a Church in Boston, on

Wednesday, November 10. 1717.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Published and Printed at the Urgent Request of
a Gentleman of his Auditory.

With a Preface by the Reverend

Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth,

Pastor of the said Church.

BOSTON:

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at the lower end of Corn-Hill, 1718.

THE PREFACE.

THAT *the Office and Work of the Gospel-Ministry is founded on Divine Institution, may easily appear to those, who read the Scriptures with serious unbyas'd thought and observation. Its a work, the right performance whereof is attended with many and great difficulties; partly from the various, frequent, furious Assaults of Satan; partly from the Lusts of Men, variously discouraging or opposing of it; and partly from the weaknesses and remaining corruptions, even of the best of those, who engage in it. Yet 'tis a Work very honourable in it self, and of vast Weight and Importance. It must needs be thought so, if we rightly consider, that 'tis the Infinitely Great, Glorious, Holy, Heart-searching God, who (in His Providence) Calls and Commissions Men to this Work; that the main Scope of the Work is, to batter down Satans Kingdom, to pull down the strong holds of Lust in the Hearts of Men, to promote the Glory of Divine Grace thro' Christ, in saving*

Mens Precious Immortal Souls, one of which is more worth than a World; and that those who engage in this Work, must give up a strict account of their Management, to that God who employs them, who can't be deceived and won't be mocked, and who will require at their hands the Blood of those Souls that perish thro' their neglect, as well as graciously and abundantly reward them if they are Faithful. These brief hints show, that the Work of the Gospel-Ministry is exceeding great, weighty and important. If the sense hereof made Paul *(who came not behind the chiefest Apostles) to cry out,* Who is sufficient for these things? *how much more might it make the ablest of Ordinary Ministers to do so? A great variety of Gifts and endowments (not to be attain'd without a course of intense laborious Study and Prayer) deep Humility of mind, unfainting application and unshaken resolution, unwearied supplies and fresh anointings from Christ the Head of Influences, are needful to a right discharge of the Work of the Ministry. These things should be seriously consider'd of, by those who think of engaging in that most weighty Work; that so with due Preparations of Soul, and dependance on God, they may enter upon it. They should gladly use such helps, as tend to fit them for, and quicken them to, a right discharge of their duty. Among such helps,* the following Sermon *may well be numbred. 'Twas Preach'd (tho' not so large as 'tis now Printed) by the Worthy* Author, *on the Day of his Ordination; and 'tis now Publish'd*

Publish'd, in Answer to Importunate Sollicitations, and at desire also the Enlargements were made. This Importunity argues not his backwardness to oblige Friends; but his modest opinion of his own performances, and his unwillingness to appear so early in Print, (being very Young) lest any should censure him for too much forwardness. Such a censure in this case, would be very groundless. *His principal design in Studying his Sermon (as he declares) was not so much the instructing of* others *in the Work of the Ministry, as the learning more clearly* his own *duty, and getting the sense of it more deeply impress'd on his* own *mind. But now 'tis Publish'd, I wish others may be as much benefited in Reading, as he was in Studying, of it. Those Sermons, which are most worthy of Commendation, have least (or no) need of it; they commend themselves: I think this may be numbred among such. Sure I am, the things contained herein, are highly worthy of the deepest and most serious consideration, of all Gospel-Ministers. I hope by perusing of it, I am more humbly sensible of my own deficiencies, then I was before; & my desire is, that for the future I may be quicken'd to act in my Station, more agreeably to what is here very solidly and cogently inculcated. I wish that all Ministers would (as this Sermon directs) make it their chief Business to* Preach Christ, *to show Men their* need *of Him, & His* suitableness & sufficiency *for them; endeavouring that they may be rightly acquainted with Him, united to Him, and more conform'd in* heart & life *to His* Image, Precepts,

cepts & Example. *Thus to* Preach Chriſt, *is more the* duty & honour *of Miniſters, than to ſhow the greateſt* Learning *in other matters, or to get the greateſt* applauſe *for it. I eſteem it a rich mercy of God to our* Land, *that He continues and ſmiles on our* College, & *thence ſends forth from time to time, able Miniſters, to ſerve His Holy Churches in this Wilderneſs, as well as in ſome other Places: Praiſe be to God the Father of Lights, for this Great Bleſſing. This is the diſtinguiſhing Glory of* New-England, *wherein it differs from all other Plantations and Diſperſions of the Britiſh Empire. I Pray, God continue our* College *a rich Bleſſing to His Churches, as long as the Sun and Moon endure. And I eſteem it as a rich Bleſſing to that Flock of our Lord Jeſus, to which I am an unworthy Paſtor, that the Worthy Author of this Sermon, (my Dear Brother & Fellow Labourer,) was ſo unanimouſly and peaceably call'd to, and ſettled in, the Paſtoral Office among them. I Pray God, long to continue his Life & Health, and greatly & conſtantly to increaſe the Gifts & Graces of His Good Spirit to him; and to make him very Faithful & Succeſsful in the weighty important Work he's engaged in, & then to take him ſafe, tho' late, to His Heavenly Kingdom. And as for the Flock themſelves, I Pray that they may be (and thanks be to God they are) a Bleſſing and a Comfort to thoſe who watch for their Souls.* My hearts deſire and Prayer to God for them is, that they may be ſaved; *that thoſe who Preach and thoſe who hear, may meet with Joy at Chriſt's Right Hand in the Great Day.*

BENJAMIN WADSWORTH.

A Practical Discourse Relating to the GOSPEL-MINISTRY.

COLOS. I. 28,9.

WHOM we Preach, warning every Man, and teaching ev'ry Man in all Wisdom; that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

FORASMUCH as it hath pleased the *Great Shepherd of the Sheep* (*whose are all our ways, and who turneth the hearts of Men as the rivers of Water*) to direct, and incline his People of *this Flock* (which He hath purchased of *Old*, whose goings are seen in *this* Holy

Holy Mountain) to *Elect* and *Invite* me (who am less, than the least of all Saints, and not worthy to be allowed to be put in trust with the Gospel) to take the *Ministerial Charge*, and Oversight of them in the Lord; and *Forasmuch* as *now* the *Set* and *Solemn time* is come for my *Publick Investiture* in awful manner (by *Prayer*, with *laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*) into the *Sacred* Office (whereunto *He* hath *called* me, and unto which *I* would in all *Humility* and *Fear*, under a sense of the *Greatness* of the *Work*, and conscious of my *own insufficiency*, in hope of the Promis'd *Divine Presence*, with utmost Sincerity, *bind* my self in the *Lord* before many Witnesses.) I wou'd learn my Duty, move my Affections, and take Encouragement from the *Passage* of Scripture *before* us—*Whom we Preach, warning every Man*, &c.

THEY are the Words of the Apostle *Paul*; and herein he has left a bright *Specimen* of his *own* conduct, for *direction* and *incentive* unto *Ministers* in the Service of the Gospel; and which therefore will afford *reflections not unseasonable* for the *present* Solemnity.

I shall not spend any of the few Minutes allotted for this Discourse, in stating the *Coherence*, and relation of the Words unto the *Context*, but *immediately* apply my self to form some proper remarks upon them, under a more *abstract* consideration. *And I trust, that none will pervert, or transfer those things, which I design for immediate cautions to my self, as charges, or personal imputations on any other; and that none will now look upon me as standing here this Day, to dictate and prescribe unto others, so much as to my self.*

To *begin*, we may

1. OBSERVE, What was the Apostle's great *Work* and Business, viz. *Preaching*. *We Preach*, says

ſays he: *We*—either (as ſome ſay) including the *other* Apoſtles, and Faithful Miniſters of Chriſt with himſelf; or elſe (as ſay others) rather putting the firſt Perſon *Plural*, for the firſt Perſon *Singular*, which was cuſtomary with him, as 'tis with us.

HOW *ignoble*, how *trivial* and *minute* ſoever this Work may appear to ſome, how *contemptible* ſoever this *fooliſhneſs of Preaching*, yet the Great *Doctor* of the Gentiles, a Star of the *firſt* Magnitude, *not a whit* behind the very *Chief* of the Apoſtles, *bro't up* at the feet of *Gamaliel*, and having profited *above many* in all the Learning both of *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, tho't it *no ſtoop* to *give himſelf to the Miniſtry of the Word*. *Unto me* (ſays he) is this *Grace* given that I ſhould *Preach*——. For the *which* alſo I *ſuffer*, *nevertheleſs* I am *not aſhamed*, neither count I my *life dear* to my ſelf, ſo that I may finiſh the *Miniſtry* I have received of the Lord. He took all occaſions thus to *magnify his Office*, and in all his Writings we find interſpers'd with a moſt pleaſant variety, ſuch notes of holy *triumph* and *glorying* in his *Work*.

2 *Cor.* 11. 5. *Act.* 22. 3. *Acts* 6. 4[e] *Eph.* 3. 8. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *Act.* 20. 24 *Ro.* 11. 13.

THE OBSERVATION here is this, namely,

THAT *Preaching* is one *great*, and *noble* part of the *Paſtoral* Duty.

THE *Miniſters* of the Goſpel are ſtyled *Stewards* of the Myſterys of God: The *Diſpenſation* of theſe is committed to *them*. Out of the Storehouſe and Repoſitory of Divine Truths, They are, *as the good Houſe-holder*, *to bring forth things new and old, things profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and inſtruction in righteouſneſs, as every Man hath received the gift, feeding the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made them Overſeers, teſtifying the Goſpel of the Grace of God.* How does our *Savior* inculcate *this*, with the moſt *pathetical*

1 *Cor.* 4. 1. —— 9. 17. *Mat* 13. 52 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. *Act.* 20. 28. *ver.* 24.

expressions of endearing affection, upon *Peter*,
Joh. 21.— and in him on every Minister, saying, *Lovest thou Me? Feed my Lambs.* As thou *lovest Me, Feed my Sheep, feed my Sheep.* And with what *Solemn Vehemence* does the
2*Tim*4.1,2 *Apostle adjure*, and exhort his *Son Timothy*? I *Charge* thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His
——1. 8. Appearing and Kingdom, *Preach the Word*, &c.
1*Tim.*4.13 *Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine.*

PREACHING then is an Ordinance of *Heaven*, and therefore not to be *declam'd* against, as *mean*
1*Thf.*5.20 or *superfluous*. How *vile* then are *they*, that *despise Prophecying*, and *forsake the Assembling themselves to-*
*Heb.*10.25 *gether, as the manner of some is*, and load *Faithful Preachers* with the most contemptuous indignities?
*Mat.*5.13; *Good Ministers* are *Lights* to the World, and *Salt*
14. unto the Earth, the *beauty* of Jacob, The *Chariots*
2*Ki.* 2.12. *and the Horsemen* thereof; The *Glory* of Christ, and
2*Cor*8.23. *Embassadors* for Him, and worthy of *double honour*.
——5.20. Tho' *Israel* acknowledge them not, yet *they are*
1*Tim.* 5.17 *glorious in the eyes of the Lord. Tho' they are reviled,*
Isai. 49. 5. *despised, buffeted, made the filth of the World, a perpe-*
1*Cor.*4.13. *tual hissing, and the off-scouring of all things to this day*, yet they appear in the sight of *Heaven*, with beams of *distinguishing* glory, entituled to *double* honour, even the *excellency* of dignity. *As 'tis*
*Isai.*52.7. *written, How beautiful upon the Mountains, are the*
*Ro.*10. 15. *feet of them that Preach the Gospel of Peace! Behold*, ye Despisers, and *wonder & perish.*

AND let *none* think it a *disparagement* to his *Greatness*, to be employ'd in *Preaching* the Gospel, and grow *too big* for *this* work, as *fit* only for *Men of low degree, and least esteemed in the Church.*

TO *excel here* is true *dignity* and *glory*. King *Solomon* esteem'd it a *first-rate* honour, and a *brighter*
*Eccl.*1.12. Ornament than his Crown. *That* is his *Style*, The PREACHER,

PREACHER, *King over Israel.* Yea, and a *greater than Solomon*, the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession, *JESUS* the *Son* of God, was a *Preacher* of the Gospel, *which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.* Heb. 2. 3. Act. 10.36

THIS was one *grand* Article of His *Commission*, and the *chief* business of His *Life*. He *continued faithful* herein even to the *Death*, *a Prophet mighty in Word and Deed before God and the People, being glorify'd of all*; yea, *after* His *Resurrection* He *return'd* to His wonted pleasant Employ, *speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.* Luk. 4.43. —24. 19. —4. 19. Act. 1. 3.

YE *see then, Brethren, your Calling, how* that some *Wise* Men, some *Mighty*, some *Noble* Personages, and the *highest* Names have *honour'd* the Institution of *Preaching*.

AND how do *these* excellent Patterns *countermine* the *dumb & idle Shepherd*, that leaveth the Flock? and *condemn* the *greedy dogs*, (as they are called) which can never have enough, and spare not the Flock, yet will *only* watch them by *Proxy*. Isa. 56. 10. Zech 11.17 Isai. 56. 11 Act. 20. 29

II. OBSERVE, What was the *Subject-matter* of the *Apostle's* Preaching, *viz.* CHRIST. *Whom* we Preach, says he, i. e. *Christ*, Whom he had expressly mentioned in the verse immediately preceeding.— *Christ* in you the hope of Glory, *Whom* we Preach,—*Christ* was the *Summ* and *Substance* of his whole Preaching, either *directly* or *reductively*; not *Circumcision*, and *the Jew's Religion after the traditions of the Fathers*; nor *Gentile Philosophy* and *vain deceit after the rudiments of the World, and the doctrines of Men.* No; so he speaks, I determined *not to know any* thing among you, save *Jesus Christ.* So also he says elsewhere, *We Preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.* Thus likewise 'tis said of the *other* Apostles, *They ceased* not daily to *Teach* and *Preach Jesus Christ.* Gal. 6.11. —1. 14. Col. 2. 8. 1 Cor. 2. 2. 2 Cor. 4.5. Act. 5. 42.

AND the excellent *Pattern*, which They've ſet, *Challenges* a perpetual *imitation* from *all* the Embaſſadors of Chriſt. All their *Sermons* are to be framed to *this* Standard.

DOCT. *CHRIST is the Grand Subject, which the Miniſters of the Goſpel ſhould in their Preaching mainly inſiſt upon.*

1 Cor. 3. 11. *NO other Foundation can any Man lay, than that which is laid.* The *Apoſtles* according to the Grace of God given to them, as wiſe Maſter-builders, *Act.* 10. 36. *have laid this Foundation*, and *unto this do all the Prophets give witneſs*; let every Man then *take heed* how he buildeth; let the Builders *beware*, they 1 *Pet.* 2. *refuſe* not this *Chief Corner-Stone*, the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets.

CHRIST is the *Centre* of Revelation, and the *adæquate Subject* of Preaching; and He muſt be the *Subſtance* and *Bottom* of every Sermon. Men muſt not *laviſh away* their Miniſtry on petty matters of *doubtful diſputation*, or *empty ſpeculation*; but they muſt Preach the *ſolid* and *weighty* truths that *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. are *according to Godlineſs*, the *Unſearchable Riches of Chriſt, to make Men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning hath been hid in God.*

THERE are ſome giddy-headed *Opinioniſts*, who *pretend* to ſee with *infallible* Eyes, and *ſet up* for indubitable *Oracles*, *transforming themſelves into Angels of Light*, yet ſpeak with the *tongue* of *Men*, and the miſerable *dialect* of *corrupt* nature, *belching out* the romantic *forgerys* and *falſe* viſions of a *diſtempered* brain *for the Faith once delivered to the Saints*; *Prophecying lyes and a thing of nought, the Jer.* 14. 14. *deceit of their heart, and the ſhadows of a dream*, having *no* better light, than the *Moon-ſhine* of unſanctify'd reaſon.

THE *Myſtery of Chriſt*, which our holy Apoſtle often

often mentions, and that for ever with admiring *rapture*, Theſe Men, the Scoffers of the laſt day, with pert and bareface'd preſumption *hoot at*, and *hunt down* as mad *enthuſiaſm*, inſipid *cant* and *jargon*; "They make it their *bauble* to play with, and their *eye-ſore*" to ſpurn and ſnarl at. Here they ſet their ſilly and ſooty wit to brisk up, and vent it ſelf in fleering ſarcaſms, or ſneering burleſque; Here they *rave* or *droll*; and *prate* againſt the faithful Preachers of Chriſt, *with malicious words*, painting 'em under *their own* colours, as Fools and Bablers, as fanatical, and fantaſtic, as Men of *ſlaviſh* minds, and *weak* underſtandings. How juſtly do theſe *malevolent* ſounds *reverberate* upon themſelves? 3 *Joh.* 10.

SUCH are *filthy dreamers, empty clouds, knowing nothing, who conſent not to wholeſome words, and to the Truth, as tis in Jeſus. Theſe* are *Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt* (whoſe end ſhall be according to their works) and are *removed* from Him unto *another* Goſpel, and ſo *lye open* to that awful *Anathema* denounced by the *Apoſtle*, ſaying, *Tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that which we've preach't unto you, let him be accurſed.* —Oh, my Soul, come not into their ſecrets; unto their Aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united. 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. *Gal.* 1. 6. —*ver.* 8. *Gen.* 49. 6.

THEY, that are *Friends of the Bridegroom*, who have *ſo learned* Chriſt, as he is taught in the School of the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, and *with whom the truth of the Goſpel does continue*, are not *aſhamed to Preach the Croſs*, and *count all things, but loſs for the excellency of the knowlege of Chriſt and Him Crucified. What is the Chaff to the Wheat? ſaith the Lord.* What is the vain *Philoſophy* of the *Greeks*, and the exact *righteouſneſs* of the *Phariſees*, but *dung and droſs to the riches of the Glory of this myſtery?* *Joh.* 3. 29. *Phil.* 3. 8. *Jer.* 23. 28.

JESUS

Joh. 6.35. *JESUS CHRIST* is the *Bread of Life*; and nothing but *this*, will suit the *nature* and *inclination* of the *Spiritual Appetite*; nothing but *this*, will *beget* and *maintain* the vital flame of *Spiritual Life*; every thing *else* will prove either a *Stone*, or a *Serpent*, unnatural & jejune, or poison & pernicious.

MINISTERS then must study to *entertain* their Flocks with a *continual Feast* on the glorious *fulness* there is in Christ; must gather fruits from *Jer.* 33.15. the *BRANCH of Righteousness*, from the *Tree of Life*, for them that hunger, feeding them *not with the meat which perisheth, but with that which endureth to everlasting life.* They must open *this Fountain of living Waters*, the great mystery of Godliness, into which all the *Doctrines* of the Gospel, that are branch'd forth into so great a variety, do, as so many rivulets or *Streams making glad the City of God*, flow and concentre.

THEY must endeavour to *set forth Christ*—— In the *dignity* of His *Person*, *as the brightness of His Father's Glory, God manifest in the Flesh.*— In the *reality, necessity, nature*, and *exercise* of His three- " fold *Office* of a *Prophet*, of a *Priest*, and of a *King*, " both in His State of Humiliation, and Exaltation. —In the glorious *benefits* of His Redemtion, the Justification of them that believe, the Adoption of Sons, Sanctification, and an Inheritance 1 *Pet.* 1.4. that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for the Saints. —In the wonderful *Methods* and means, in and by which we are *called into the fellowship of* 1 *Cor.* 1.9. *the Son our Lord*, and " made *partakers* of the Redemtion by Christ. — In the nature, and signification, the excellency and worth of all the *Ordinances*, and Institutions of Christ, with the obligations on all to attend upon them; *& the like.*

Heb. 1. 3. 1 *Tim.* 3.16

WHATEVER Subject they are upon, it must be some how *pointed* unto Christ. All *Sin* must be witnessed

witneſſed againſt, and preached down, as *oppoſite* to the holy *nature*, the wiſe and gracious *deſigns*, and juſt *government* of *Chriſt*. So all *duty* muſt be perſwaded to, and preach't up, with due regard unto *Chriſt*; to His *Authority* commanding, and to His *Spirit* of Grace aſſiſting, as well as to the *merit* of His Blood commending; and *this*, to daſh the vain preſumption, that decoys ſo many into ruin, who will ſecurely hang the weight of their *hopes* upon the horns of the *Altar*, without paying expected *homage* to the *Sceptre*, of Chriſt. All the Arrows of ſharp *rebuke* are to be ſteep'd in the *Blood of Chriſt*; and *this*, to prevent thoſe deſponding *fears* and *frights* of guilt, which ſometimes awfully work to a fatal iſſue. *Dark* and ignorant Sinners are to be directed to *Chriſt*, as *the Sun of Righteouſneſs*: *convinced* Sinners are to be led to *Chriſt*, as the *Great Atonement*, & the only *City of Refuge*; *Chriſt* is to be lifted up on high, for the *wounded* in Spirit to look unto, as the bitten Iſraelites to the *brazen Serpent* of old. The *Sick*, the *Lame*, and *Diſeaſed* are to be carry'd to *Chriſt*, as the Great *Phyſician*, the Lord *our Healer*: the *diſconſolate*, and timorous to be guided to *Chriſt*, as the *Conſolation of Iſrael* and *in us the hope of Glory*. Every *comfort* adminiſtred is to be *ſweeten'd* with pure water from *this Well of Salvation*, which *only* can quench the fiery darts of the evil one. The *Promiſes* of the Goſpel are to be apply'd, as being *in Chriſt Yea, and in Him Amen, to the Glory of God*. So the *Threatnings* of the Law are to lighten and flaſh in the eyes of Sinners, as the *terrors of the Lord*, and ſparks of the holy reſentment of an *incenſed Saviour*, which hover now over the Children of diſobedience, and will one day unite, and fall heavy upon them. The *Love* of Chriſt to us is to be held forth as the great conſtraining *motive*

Mal. 4. 2.
Joh. 3. 14, 15.
Mat. 9. 12.
Luk. 2. 25.
Col. 1. 27.
Iſai. 12. 3.
2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

tive to Religion, and the *Life* of Chriſt as the bright, engaging *pattern* of it. *Progreſs* and *Increaſe* in holineſs are to be repreſented, under the notion of an *abiding* in *Chriſt*, and *growing up into Him, who is the Head, even Chriſt*: *Perfection* in Grace—as *the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; and *Eternal Life*, as a *being for ever with the Lord where He is, a beholding His Glory*, and dwelling *in our Maſters Joy*.

Joh. 15. 4. *Eph*, 4.15, —*ver.* 13. *Joh.* 17.24 *Mat* 25.21

THUS (in imitation of the *Apoſtolical* way of preaching) there muſt be a beautiful *intertexture* of references to *Chriſt*;" a golden thread" twiſted into every Diſcourſe, to *leaven*, and *perfume* the ſame, ſo as to make it *expreſs a ſavour of the knowledge of Chriſt*. Thus "every *mite* caſt into the treaſury of the *Temple* muſt bear this *inſcription*" upon it, (which was once the humble language of a pious Martyr in the Flames) NONE but CHRIST, NONE but CHRIST; that ſo every one, *beholding* in the Word Preach't, *as in a glaſs, the Glory of the Lord, may be changed into the ſame image from glory to glory*.

2 *Cor.* 2.14. 2 *Cor.* 3.18.

III. OBSERVE the Apoſtle's *manner* of preaching; and that is with *Impartiality*, *Wiſdom*, and *diligent Application*.

1. OBSERVE His IMPARTIALITY—*warning* (ſays he) *every* Man, and *teaching every* Man. —Here he *amplifys* his work by the two principal inſtances of it, viz. *Admonition and Inſtruction*. [Hence it is the *Office* of Miniſters to *rebuke*, as well as to *direct*; and the *order* of the words ſeems to *hint*, that *reproof* for Sin commonly goes *before*, to open the door for the entertainment of *Inſtruction* in duty; till Men are *convinced of Sin*, they will not be *inſtructed in Righteouſneſs*.] And the *Apoſtle* declares his *Fidelity* and *Impartiality*, as to *both*—*warning every Man and teaching every Man*.

Tit. 2. 15.

He

He taught every where in every Church, and ceased not to *warn every one* Night and Day with tears, both the *wise and unwise*; reckoning himself *a Debtor* to the *Jew* first, and also to the *Greek*, and accordingly applying himself to *every one*, neither fearing the faces, nor sparing the faults of any. 1 *Cor.* 4. 17. *Act.* 20. 31. *Rom.* 1. 14.

DOCT. *IT becomes the Embassadors of Christ, to maintain unspotted* Impartiality *in all their Ministerial Dispensations to their Flocks.*

HENCE, we've that solemn adjuration of our Apostle to Timothy— I *Charge* thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things *without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.* Ministers ou't not in any of their Administrations to be *sway'd* by *personal* kindness, nor prejudice: They must not be byass'd by *sinister* views of *private* advantage and disadvantage; neither *smiles*, nor *terrors* may *stop*, *divert*, or *slacken* 'em in their work: with all *indifference*, and *indiscriminating* regard to *out-side* pomp or poverty they are to *warn* and to *teach every* Man in every sphære. *All Souls are God's*; *as the Soul of the Father, so also the Soul of the Son*; as of the *Master*, so of the *Servant* likewise. *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?* The *Rich* and the *Poor* stand upon a *level* in the *things of God*, and are rated at the *same* value in the Book of Life, *Where there is neither Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all*; *for of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of Persons.* The prerogatives of *birth*, *honour*, *estate* and the *like*, do not *commend* unto *God*; They should not then be *accepted* of *Men*, the Ministers of Christ, so as to beget *contempt* on the one hand, or slavish *dread* 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. *Ezek.* 18. 4. *Mal.* 2. 10. *Col.* 3. 11. *Act.* 10. 34.

on the other: "*external* relations bear *no* weight at the *Gospel*-beam": the *Balances* of the *Sanctuary* are, then, to be held steddily with an *equal* hand.

ON the *one* side, as to *counsel and advice*; Ministers must be as willing and industrious to *instruct* the *Servile* as the *Honorable*; the *Poor* among the Brethren as the *Rich* in this World. They must not *despise* a Soul the *more*, nor *value* holiness the *less*, for being wrap't up in the garments of filth, and lying abject on a dunghill. They must not *disdain* to enter into *smoaky* cottages, nor think it *beneath* 'em to dress the *Vineyard of the poor, whom God hath chosen—heirs of the kingdom*. God is often *better* serv'd, and more honour'd in the Poor Mans *hovel*, than in the goodly *palaces* of the Great. The humble valleys are often more fruitful, than the high, and swelling hills. If Ministers *despise the poor, are they not then become partial in themselves?*

Tit. 2. 9.

Rev. 23. 10

Jam. 2. 5.

—ver. 4.

AND on the *other* hand, as to *censure and admonition*; they must be *impartial Monitors*, & faithfully warn the Rich, and *principal of the Flock*, as well as the *base and mean*; neither to be brib'd nor bugbear'd, neither to be wheedl'd nor huff't out of their duty and work. They must *beware, not* to compliment *quality*, and distinction, nor court *popular* influence and plentiful fortunes. *Here* indeed the *best* are too apt to *dauh*, and palliate; to *shut their eyes*, or *stop their mouths*, or *prophesy smooth things*, and *sow pillows*, tempering their speech to the corrupt pallate, and the *itching ear*, indulging the most fatal endearments, and unjust complaisance unto wickednesses in high places. But what a foul indignity is *this* to the Sacred Character? This is *corrupting the Covenant of Levi, a being partial in the Law, and accepting Mens persons in judgment which is not good.*

Jer. 25. 34.

Isai. 30. 10.

Ezek. 13. 18

Mal. 2. 8, 9.

Prov. 24. 23

The Grandees of the World have too many fawning

awning *Paraſites* often, that ſtroak and ſooth them, yaſs'd by the *hopes* of favour, & influenc'd by the ear of frowns.

BUT *Miniſters* muſt not ſtand *dumb*, and *idle*, fraid of haughty greatneſs, when bold invaſions are made on the kingdom of Chriſt, His Laws trampled under foot, and His Honour laid in the duſt; *here* they muſt know *no* difference between *Prince* and *Peaſant*; *Now* they muſt be touch't with *concern*, flame with *zeal*, and burn with *jealouſy* for the Lord of Hoſts, *the coals* wher of are *Cant.* 8. 6, 7 to be a moſt *vehement flame*, which *many waters cannot quench, nor the floods* of the ungodly *drown*; *and if a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe* for a bribe, it muſt be *contemned utterly*. *They muſt* *Jer.* 1. 17. *gird up their loins, and ſet their foreheads as an adamant, harder than a flint, and ariſe, and lift up their* *Ezek.* 3. 9. *voice, and cry in the ears of theſe Sons of belial*, ſay- —— 11. ing, *Thus ſaith the Lord, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: exhorting, and rebuking with all authority, being bold in God to ſpeak the Goſ-* *Tit.* 2. 15. *pel, even ſo not as pleaſing Men, but God, who tryeth* 1 *Theſ.* 2. 2, *the heart, neither at any time uſing words of flattery,* —— 4, 5. *not knowing any Man after the fleſh.* The modeſt 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. Young Man *Elihu*, has left an imitable Example hereof unto us — *Days* (ſaith he) *ſhou'd ſpeak, but* *Job* 32. *great Men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand judgment*; *therefore hearken* unto *me, I will anſwer my part* — *and let me not* (*I pray you*) *accept any man's perſon*, &c. *in ſo doing my Maker wou'd take me away.* The very *Phariſees* themſelves gave *that* teſtimony to *Chriſt*, — *Maſter, we know that thou* *Mat.* 22. 16 *art true, and teacheſt the way of God in truth, neither careſt thou for any man; for thou regardeſt not the perſon of men.* When *David* the *King* himſelf *deſ-* 2 *Sam.* 12. *piſed the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his ſight*, faithful *Nathan* dealt *plainly* with him. So

1 Kin. 18. did *Elijah, very jealous for the Lord God of Israel,* re-
prove *Ahab,* unmov'd at the terrors of the King
Nehem. 13. So did good *Nehemiah contend* with the prophane
Mat. 14. 4. *Rulers* and *Nobles.* So did *John* Baptist admonish
Herod the Tetrarch, undaunted at a Crown and
Act. 24. 25. Sceptre. So *Paul* a prisoner in bonds, did with
great *freedom & plainness* reason of the Faith in
Christ, of righteousness, temperance and judg-
ment to come, before a corrupt & wicked *Judge*
'till he struck the stout and bold transgressor into
trembling horror.

THUS *Ministers* must with the *rod of their mouth*
Isai. 11. 4. and the *breath of their lips,* cast down the wicked
to the ground, even them that ride on the *high*
places of the earth: Thus the huge *mountains of*
Ezek. 6. 2. *Israel* must be touch't (as well as the little Hills)
tho' they shoot out their arrows with fiery indig-
nation, and fortify the height of their strength.

Mat. 4. 19. MINISTERS are called *Fishers of Men*: now
the *Net* of the Gospel (to allude to what One
has faithfully and wisely observ'd concerning hu-
mane Laws) *is not* to be like a *Spiders web,* to
catch *small* flies, and let the *great* escape.

1 Cor. 4. 1. *AGAIN,* They're styled *Stewards*; and *'tis re-*
quired of a Steward, that a Man be found faithful in
giving to *every* one his allowance, feeding *all* the
Family, *one* as well as *another.*

Mat. 9. 37. *AGAIN,* They are termed *Husbandmen,* that *sow*
1 Cor. 3. 8, 9 *and water*; and they must cultivate and improve
2 Tim. 2. 6. *every* piece of Land; They must tend *every* plant
that grows in their nursery. They must know
the tall tree and the low shrub, even *all the trees,*
from the Cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop that
springs out of the Wall.

Eph. 4. 11. *AGAIN,* They are call'd *Shepherds & Pastours*;
Act. 20. 28. and must take heed to *all* the Flock, putting no
difference.

AGAIN,

AGAIN, They are call'd *Watchmen*; the faith- *Ezek.* 3. 17.
l Watchman walks the *rounds*, and inſpects the *Cant.* 3. 3.
ole Town, not *confining* his care to this, or that
rticular houſe: ſo they that *keep the watch of the* 2 *Tim.* 4. 5.
rd at the gates of the temple, muſt walk *circum-* *Act.* 5. 42.
ctly, *watch in all things, and to every houſe.* They
uſt be *cloath'd with the Sun*, and their going forth
uſt be from the end of the Heaven, and their
ne thro'out all the Earth. They muſt not ſuffer
e *moſt filthy* corner to *eſcape* their view, nor let
here be any place, *where their voice is not heard.*
hey muſt be *full of Eyes within*, without, *before* *Rev.* 4. 6, 8.
nd behind, looking about *every* way; ſetting the
atch *round*, and riding the circuit *thro'*.

AGAIN, They are ſtyled *Soldiers*; and they muſt 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.
ft up their voice as a trumpet to warn *ev'ry*
Man, lay the Siege *round about*, draw the Sword
f the Spirit upon *ev'ry* adverſary, ſetting the
oint thereof againſt *all* their gates, ſmiting *ev'ry*
ne, as well *Agag* the King, as the meaneſt *Ama-* 1 *Sam.* 15.
kite, not ſparing the *beſt* of the ſpoil, any more
han the *vile* and *refuſe*.

THE golden rule of *Charity*, and tender *pity*
o the *Souls of Men*, immutably *obliges* and
oudly *ſummons* Miniſters to ſuch fidelity, and *im-*
partiality in their Adminiſtrations. It ſhould
melt them into tears of holy indignation, & move
heir bowels of compaſſion to behold wretched
Men, *wronging their own Souls, ſwallowing deadly poi-* *Prov.* 8. 36.
ſon, playing on the hole of the aſp, & caſting fire-brands,
arrows and death; and they ſhould be quicken'd ſo-
emnly from God to *charge* and check ſuch, even 1 *Tim.* 6. 17
he *rich* and great, and by all the dear and ſeaſo-
nable diſſwaſives of love to *bank* up their way,
ſtop their carrier, and *turn 'em from the error of their*
ways unto the wiſdom of the juſt.

SO alſo the natural law of *ſelf-preſervation*, & the
eternal

eternal rules of compassion to their *own* Souls, infer the strongest obligations unto *this* duty. If they do not *cry aloud* to shew transgressors their ways (what *bulk & figure* soever they're of) admitting there be *not* the most *palpable* grounds to *despair* of success in the admonition, they are *look'd upon* by the chief and unerring Judge as *interested* in the *guilt*, and *accessory* to the *ruin* of such as perish thro' *their* neglect; and they shall receive a just recompence in themselves, when God shall come to *make inquisition for blood.*

Psal. 9. 12.

THE *transmigration* of Sin from *perishing* Souls unto *unfaithful* Watchmen is no *platonic dream*, or airy notion, but a *doctrin according to godliness* taught in the School of *Christ.* The mouth of truth hath spoken it — *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not scattereth. If thou speakest not to warn the wicked from his wicked way, and in any wise to rebuke him to save his life, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou shalt suffer sin upon him, and his blood will I require at thy hands.* As Ministers then would *deliver* their *own* Souls, and at last *appear* before the Judgment-Seat of Christ *pure from the blood of all Men*, they must warn *ev'ry* Man, and teach *every* Man without *fear* of undue *censures*, or threatning *dangers.*

Luk. 11. 23
Ezek. 3. 18
Lev. 19. 17.
Act. 20. 26

2. OBSERVE, The Apostle's WISDOM in the discharge of his Work—*warning & teaching every Man in all Wisdom.* Wisdom is the *Soul*, that *wings* and gives *life* to the *most industrious* application in the pursuit of any end propounded, *without* the help *whereof*, to *concert* proper *measures*, all possible *endeavours*, in some cases, may *starve and miscarry.* The *Apostle* therefore, that he might not *run in vain*, nor *fight as one that beats the air*, made it his sollicitous concern to *order his affairs with discretion*, and *to work as a wise Master-builder.* He taught

Phil. 2. 16.
1 *Cor.* 9. 26.
2 *Cor.* 3. 10.

aught every Man in *all Wiſdom*, ſpeaking with
he *tongue of the wiſe, which uſeth knowlege aright,* Prov. 15. 2.
nd exerciſing *the pen of the ready Scribe, well in-* Mat. 13. 52
ſtructed to the kingdom of God.

DOCT. THE Miniſters of the Goſpel had need be *very wiſe and prudent* in all their Adminiſtrations.

THEY that are *to win Souls* muſt be *wiſe*. Solo- Prov. 11. 30.
mon ſays, *He that ſendeth a meſſage by the hand of a* —26. 6.
fool, cutteth off the feet and drinketh damage. As
a Man without *feet*, ſo is a Meſſenger without
wiſdom. The *higheſt* improvements, *ſeperate* from
that *ſpirit of wiſdom, which is profitable to direct*, will Eccl. 10. 10.
prove but of little and uncertain benefit.

AS *Policy*, if not temper'd with a due proportion of Piety, may be called a *malignant Comet*; ſo *Piety*, without Policy, ſome have compar'd to a *dark Lanthorn*; as giving too *faint* a light, to direct a *Miniſter* in his work, that is ſo full of important *duty*, and a great variety (ſometimes) of uncommon *difficulties*, and unlook'd for emergent caſes, which demand the moſt ſagacious eye, a penetrating tho't, a commanded preſence of mind, ſound experience, and a well-poiz'd judgment.

AGAIN, *Zeal* not according to knowlege, is but an *erratic fire*, that will often lead us into *boggs & pracipices*; *ardour* of ſpirit, without a temperature of *prudence & diſcretion*, portends nothing but wild *confuſion.*

SO *Magnanimity*, if not in conjunction with *dexterity, courage of heart* without the orderly Steerage of a *wiſe head*, will *ſeldom* do any *great* exploits. "A *brazen* face fix't to an *empty* skull"—is but a *miſerable* tool to be employ'd in any affair of *conſequence* and *intricate* involvement; & will prove, but as the *ſounding braſs*, or *tinkling cymbal.*

An

An *unwiſe, imprudent Miniſter* is a *Soloeciſm* in terms, as to ſay a *dark* Sun, an *empty* Fountain, a *blind* Watchman, or an *ignorant* Guide, that cannot diſcharge their *proper* duty, nor any wiſe anſwer their next ends. Miniſters can *never* aſſert the juſt *honour* of their *Station*, nor fulfil the noble *deſign* of their *inſtitution*, without ſome *tolerable* degree of Wiſdom; *this* is an excellent talent, which it behoves and becomes them to *ſearch for, as for hid treaſures, lifting up their voice for underſtanding, and bowing their heart to wiſdom as the principal thing, as a crown of glory, and an ornament of grace.*

Iſai. 56. 10

Prov. 2. 4.

—4. 7.

BUT let us here enter into a few particulars, wherein this Miniſterial Wiſdom is to be diſplayed.

IT might be premiſed,

§. 1. *MINISTERS muſt be very Wiſe in ordering their private converſation, that they don't allow any thing that may extenuate their influence, and enervate their adminiſtrations.*

Act. 6. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 7.

THEY muſt be of the moſt approved morals, of *honeſt report, well ſpoken of for good works.* A ſpotleſs, clear, and unblemiſh't credit, will add a forcible *authority unto*, and reflect a beautiful *charm upon*, their publick Preaching. The *want* of this unhinges the door, and opens the gate to floods of contempt; unpins the whole frame of their Miniſtry, makes the very pillars ſhake and totter, puts the foundations out of courſe, and threatens all with ſhipwreck and diſſolution. *Wiſe* therefore is that ſolemn *adviſe* of the Apoſtle to Titus, *—Let no Man deſpiſe thee*—Do nothing, that ſhall *blaſt* or *blot* your reputation, but always ſo act, and ſpeak, and govern your ſelf, as to preſerve an untarniſht luſtre on your character; *This* will command an affectionate veneration to your *Perſon*, and ſhed rays of light, and heat to recommend, and animate your *Preaching*.

Tit. 1. 7.

IF

IF a Man's *Name* be *as precious Ointment*, it will cast an *odour of a sweet smell* on his *Ministry*, give it a grateful *savour*, and an agreeable *relish*. But if the *Sons* of Eli, *the Priests, make themselves vile, it will cause all the Assembly to abhor the offerings of the Lord, to despise his Altar and stumble at the law.* 1 Sam. 2. 17 Mal. 2. 8.

EXAMPLE strikes *quick* & sinks *deep*; carries in it a peculiar *sovereignty*, and a much more *controlling* power, than dry *rules*, and the meer *demonstrations* of reason. Let Ministers, then, *speak with the tongue of Angels*, and harangue with *seraphic art* and *ardour* against the Vices of the age and place they live in; *if soil'd and tainted themselves*, this will be a standing *bar* in their way, a *dead weight* in corrupt minds against the impression of truth, and will be of fatal tendency to *fasten the hands of wickedness*, and *strengthen the hand of evil-doers*, that *none shall return from his wickedness*. 1 Cor. 13. 1. Jer. 23. 14.

IMPENITENCE will *insult* and defend itself against the authority & force of their *Instructions* by this, *They say and do not*, — and give a killing blow to their most just *reprehensions*, by objecting that invidious *Proverb*, *Physician, heal thy self; wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self, for thou, that judgest, doest the same things.* Yea, the *ill* life of Ministers cast such a *mist* before the eyes of many, as to make 'em *resolve* even *Religion* itself into *nothing* but superstitious *whimsy*, or mere *frenzy*, and think all *their* most zealous *Sermons* upon it are but *imposture* and a *mock-shadow*, the bubblings of a disturbed fancy, or the babblings of cunning hypocrisy; that they do but *act a part*, and preach *only* because 'tis their *occupation, and by this craft they get their living*; so branding all as religious *policy*, to prepare and pave the way to *filthy lucre*, supposing that *gain* is all their *godliness*. Mat. 23. 3. Luk. 4. 23. Rom. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 6. 5.

THIS indeed is the most *unwarrantable logic*: yet *unreasonable* Men giddily *stagger* into the sad *conclusion* over the *stumbling-block*, which Ministers *throw* in the *way* by their *dissolute* practice. Ministers had need *dread* the pernicious *consequence* of *thus* putting a *rock of offence* before the *blind*; and
1 *Pet.* 2. 15. see to it, that by *well-doing they put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men.* They must keep themselves *unpolluted* from the corruptions that are in
1 *Tim.* 3. 2, — 6. 11. the World thro' lust; be *blameless and flee these things*; *and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness* and holiness in all manner of conversation; *giving no offence in any thing, that the Ministry be not blamed.* "They must be *Orthopraxi*, as well as *Orthodox*." Unto *purity* of doctrine they must add unspotted *Piety* of Life; and *transcribe* their *publick* Sermons in their *private* visible actions and behaviour, as ever they wou'd *preserve* the *dignity* of their Character, or *promote* the *efficacy* of Gospel-truths.
2 *Cor.* 6. 3.

THEY must *carefully* keep at the *utmost distance* from *ev'ry thing*, that *looks like* sensuality, or indulgence; not only *not* run to the *same excess of riot* with others, but inflexibly curb themselves, and with due severity guard against *too near an approach* at any time to the vanities of the World; *cautious* not to venture to the *utmost* limits of *innocent* liberty, lest *others* quite *transgress* the line; and then *gild over* their *own* licence with a vain pretence of *imitation*, and think themselves *not* a little *justified* by transferring the *like* follys upon their *Ministers*. The mere *appearance* of evil, or any vergency toward it in these, *they* think will *sufficiently* excuse the *reality* in themselves.

MINISTERS had need *ponder the path of their feet*, lest they get too near the brink; and look heedfully to their goings, that *their foot-steps slip not*:

strait

strait is the gate and narrow the way, hedg'd up on every side; *malice* and *envy* are perpetually *spies* upon 'em, *spread a net for their feet*, and *watch for their halting*; and the least *slip* or *side-step*, a single *inadvertency* shall be *catch't at* by an ill-natur'd, captious World, and *aggravated* into a crime of the most *flagrant* guilt, which the *intire* series of a prudent, exemplary deportment (in all *other* instances) can never *atone* for; and tho' Ministers are Men *subject to like passions with others*, and are "but Candidates for Perfection while here" yet this will not serve for any plea of *abatement*, nor *stop* the mouth of *calumny*, but the very *common* impotencies of humane nature (incidental to the *best*,) shall be unfairly improv'd to slurr the fairest name, and draw a cloud over the brightest and most just reputation.

Jer. 20. 10.

Acts 14. 15. *Jam.* 5. 17.

GREAT is the difficulty of *forming* and *securing* so unfully'd a Character, as is necessary to maintain that *reverence*, which is *due* to Ministers, and is so requisite to preserve the *solemnity*, and facilitate the *success* of all their ministerial *Performances*. However, they must exert their utmost care and endeavour, and use all innocent arts (being *wise as Serpents and harmless as Doves*) to obtain and keep an interest in the *good opinion*, and *kind acceptance* of the World, but all with a *pure* design to advantage the discharge of their trust, as *that* is a *preparative* of the mind, and a door of entrance into the Soul.

Mat 10. 16

§. 2. *MINISTERS must use great Wisdom & Discretion in the managing of their Publick Discourses.*

1. THEY must see to it, that the *Subject* be *adapted* to the *present* circumstances and necessity of their *Hearers*. They must preach *necessary* truths, and *seasonable*.

IN the discharge of the Pastoral Care, *Prudence*

demands a *distinction* to be made between *one* season, and another. For to *every purpose there is time*
Eccl. 8. 6 —— 3. 11. *and judgment, and every thing is beautiful in its season.* A Word in the *present* day may be proper and beneficial, which at *another* time may lose its efficacy, or be of pernicious consequence. That which is a cup of *consolation* at one time, may prove a *deadly* draught at another. The *Counsel*
2 Sam 17. 7 *of Achitophel,* says Hushai, *is not good at this time.*
Eccl. 8. 5. It is given in, as a property of the *wise* Man, *His heart discerneth both time and judgment.* He is a *Physician of no value* that does not understand the true constitution of the Patient, the several aspects of the distemper upon him, and does not observe *critical junctures* for application, both by way of remedy, correction and antidote or prevention.

MINISTERS must carefully endeavour to *discern the face of the times,* & observe what symptoms
Gal. 4. 20. attend the Body of Christ, and *know when to change their voice,* and how to *conform* themselves to that *variety* of cases they meet with; *their Peoples wants being always to govern 'em in the choice of Subjects, and not their own ease, nor fancy.*

HENCE, 'tis the duty of Ministers to *visit,* as much as they *conveniently* can, *from house to house,*
Prov 27. 23 that they may *know the state of their Flocks,* "take cognizance of particular Persons, and Cases,"
1 Ch. 12. 32 and *get understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do* in the present circumstance and condition. If Ministers are not *wise as to Law,*
Esth. 1. 13. *and Judgment,* and are *unknowing* in the times and seasons, they may well be compar'd to the *Pilot,* who can never steer a safe and even course, without an acquaintance with *particular* coasts, rocks, quicksands, channels, winds and the like; for tho' he may have very good insight into the *abstract* notion, and *general theory* of Sailing, yet for want of

practice

practice and *experience*, he's often *non-plus'd* with emergent difficulties, and shov'd beyond the force of his reason by untho't of contingencies, that he becomes *Ludibrium ventorum*, tossed about by every wind and raging of the Sea, & to avoid danger on one hand sometimes runs into destruction on the opposite shoar.

MINISTERS may, for *want* of knowing the true *State* and *Case* of their People, their humours, and distempers, inclinations, and affairs, what Sins are most rife among them, what temptations they are most in danger of, what duties are most commonly omitted, what things are most ready to dye, what principles they live and act upon and the like, allow an *undue* proportion of their Ministry to Subjects of *less* importance, *unseasonably* Preach up some truths and duties, and Preach against some errors and vices to the *accidental* damage and disservice of Religion.

MINISTERS must *not indeed shun to declare the whole Counsel of God*; Howbeit there are *some* times, when a truth is *not* to be insisted on, because *unseasonable*, in that the minds of People are not *prepared* for the reception thereof. Thus said our Saviour; *I've yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* And so the Apostle to the Hebrews; *of Whom*, i. e. Christ *we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered; seeing ye are dull of hearing,—and are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.* Act. 20.27. Joh. 16.12 Heb 5.11,2

THERE are *different* degrees of growth in the Flock of Christ; and that which may be a very proper entertainment for *one* Soul, may be very unsuitable food to *another*. The Stewards of the Gospel must see to it then, that they make a wise *distinction* in their dispensations according to the various necessities, and different improvements

of

ver. 13, 4. of the *Family*; feeding the *babes* with the sincere *milk* of the Word, (with *easy* truths, and *first principles of the Oracles of God*,) but dealing out *strong meat* (Doctrines of a *deeper* search, and more difficult of digestion,) *to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

2. *WISDOM* will direct Ministers to *handle* the Subject that they treat upon, *in a manner suited to the capacity of the Hearers, and the dignity of divine truths.* The *matter* must be fit, and so the *manner*. The Eccl. 12. 12 Preacher must seek to find out *acceptable Words* and a suitable *method*; so as to *inform* the understanding, and *inflame* the affections, so as neither to "offend the *weak*, nor give advantage to the *malicious*"—so as to secure his administrations from contempt, to further the design and maintain the dignity of Preaching; always *speaking* Act. 26. 25. *forth the words of truth and soberness*, with propriety and decency, with clear light, good order, & plain demonstration, without impertinency, confusion, and empty vociferation; so as at once to charm the ear, reach the mind, and touch the heart.

(1.) *THEY must adapt their Discourse to the capacity of the Hearers.*

[1.] AS to *Method*. Their thoughts must be dig into proper order, & dispos'd in the most rational, easy, natural method, without tumultuary perplexness, or a dry exactness. Scholastical accuracy, and Metaphysical distinctions, a great reach of tho't, and a Systematical thred of reason, are proportion'd to but very few Auditories. An *Argumentative* way, and too *strict* adhærence to the nice rules of the ART of reasoning, do's but *amuse* common Hearers ("Strong Wine is more heady than hearty,) and therefore ought to be avoided.

[2.] AS to *Style*. The truths of the Gospel must

muſt be repreſented to the underſtanding in the moſt *intelligible* Language, with perſpicuity, and eaſineſs of expreſſion. The Apoſtle ſays to the Corinthians, *Except ye utter by the tongue words eaſy to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? for ye ſhall ſpeak into the air.* And then he ſays, *I thank my God, I ſpeak with tongues more than you all: yet in the Church I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that by my voice I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue.* The pompous Oratory of the Schools, and luxuriant ſtrains of Rhetoric, Academical terms and Philoſophical nicety of diction, are *above* common capacities, and to be perpetually dealing in theſe is *to ſpeak into the air*, and raiſe the duſt to blind Men's eyes. When Miniſters ſtudy rather to be *florid*, than *ſolid*, and labour continually for *lofty* phraſes and *great ſwelling words of vanity*, they are only ſpinning a *Spiders web*; and the *Orator* perhaps may *win applauſe*, but the *Miniſter* in the mean time *not* win a *Soul*, the divine end of Preaching. They muſt follow the Example of CHRIST, the Great *Teacher* ſent from God, who came not with excellency of Speech, and the enticing words of Man's wiſdom, but with much plainneſs of ſpeech. As it was prophecy'd concerning Him, *He ſhall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, He ſhall gather the Lambs with His arm, and carry them in His boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young*: which expreſſions decipher to us Chriſt's tender care of Souls, His humble *familiarity* in *teaching* His People, attempering His proviſions to every taſte, cloathing His inſtructions with language calculated to every capacity. Herein it becomes Miniſters to imitate Him, and not tower aloft above low underſtandings in lawleſs Altitudes of expreſſion, (as the manner

1 *Cor.* 14. 9.

ver. 18, 9.

2 *Pet.* 2. 18.

Iſai 40. 11.

of

of ſome is.) but uſing a Style *level* to the *unlearned* and *unskilful*, delivering their tho'ts with a *natural* turn of ſpeech, and in the moſt entertaining images, which, where the *matter* is *weighty* and important, is voted by the *beſt* Judges to be the *trueſt* eloquence However (no doubt) ſome particular Occaſions, Auditory's, Subjects, &c. will bear ſomething more of politeneſs without vanity, than one would ordinarily chuſe.

(2.) *THE Diſcourſe muſt be ſuited to the majeſty, and importance of the divine Subject.*

[1.] AS to the *Language*. Miniſters in Preaching muſt uſe *ſuch* words, as will *exhibit* the moſt *bright* and *clear* idea of every truth, and ſet it forth in its whole *emphaſis*, *light*, and genuine *beauty*, to the beſt advantage. They muſt endeavour for as *thorow* an underſtanding and *penetration* into the myſteries of Godlineſs as they can, and labour to *draw the images* thereof in their Sermons, as near as poſſible in their *full proportion*, and their *native purity & complexion* with the moſt *lively* colours; neither clouded with thoſe *darkſhades*, which ſometimes *ſtain* the luſtre of divine truths, nor varniſh'd over with the *falſe paint* of art, which dazzles the ſight, and entangles the eyes, that they cannot ſee the *true light of the knowlege of the glory of God in the face of Chriſt Jeſus*. As Miniſters muſt not indulge a vain affectation of *gawdineſs, and glittering Ornaments*; ſo neither, on the *other* hand, may they allow themſelves to appear wrap't up in a *rude* and *ſlovenly dreſs*. The *Maſters* of divine oratory *forbid* thoſe odd turns and forms of expreſſion which ſound ſo *very* harſh to a polite ear, and look ſo *very* unſhapely to a critical eye; and *condemn* thoſe homely metaphors, and improprieties of ſpeech, which adulterate *the ſincere milk of the Word*, ſpoil the pure taſte of ſpiritual truths,

2 Cor. 4. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 2.

truths, and are juſtly nauſeous and unſavory to Men of a nicer ſenſory, and more delicate palate. They recommend "a *mixt* air of *ſimplicity* and *majeſty*," decent neatneſs and elegance without flanting pomp and gayty; when a Man *deſcends* to the *ordinary* underſtanding, and yet *ſpeaks as becomes the Oracles of God*, agreeably to the dignity and weight of the ſacred Subject, with thoſe ſerious and ſolemn, pathetical and moving words, that will not ſo much *entertain curioſity and a wanton imagination*, as *affect* the *Soul*, and *perſwade* the *mind*—words, that will be *as goads and nails faſten'd by the Maſter of Aſſembly's*, that will enter the *Conſcience*, and breath heavenly *fire* to melt and enliven the *dead affections*. 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. *Eccl.* 12. 11

TO dreſs up divine truths in a *looſe*, *courſe* and *ſordid garb*, is too often but to draw a *veil* over them, and to *invite contempt*, where the deepeſt and utmoſt humble *veneration* is due, to *faithful ſayings, worthy of all acceptation*. And therefore (as one ſays) "He that affects to act the *ruſtic* "*clown* in Preaching—is as likely to forfeit the great deſign of the Miniſtry, as he that plays "the *finical Orator*; *all* the difference between "them being *this*, that while one clouds the "Window with *paint*, t'other dawbs it with *mud*", —both ecclipſing the light, *rendering the viſion as the words of a book that is ſealed*, and *darkening counſel by words without knowledge*. The *ſpeech of both is as wind, but how forceable are right words*, that neither ſoar *above* the *reach* of the *Audience*, nor grovel *beneath* the *ſanctity*, and noble quality of the *Subject*? *Job* 6 25.

[2.] AS to *Method*, and *Argument*. It behoves Miniſters in their Diſcourſes to keep a ſteady *train* of tho't, to obſerve a good *connection*, and regular *tranſitions*; to rank and range ev'ry part

or particular into their proper post and place, adjusting the whole into the best and most becoming Scheme. So some understand that of the Apostle
1*Tim.*2.15 to Timothy, *Study to shew thy self approved—rightly dividing the word of truth*, i. e. duly methodizing and martialling Gospel-truths, unfolding & distributing the several branches of each truth in the most apt & apposite manner. It wounds the *beauty*, slacken the nerves, & emasculates the *power* of the great Doctrines of Religion, for the Preacher to vent his tho'ts upon 'em all in a *confus'd huddle*, shuffl'd together in a wild and inconsistent manner. Methodical pertinence and cohærence then are to be study'd for. *Order* is the strength and glory of all things.—

SO likewise *Ministers* must endeavour to *prove* every truth with the best *Arguments*; and to *press* every *duty* with the most prevaling *motives*, with all the *artifices* of persuasion, and the strongest *enforcements* of reason. Dogmatical assertion and a magisterial air seldom do, without the aids of sound demonstration, and the proper arts of insinuation. Ministers must conform to the Example of Christ, *who taught* the people *as one having*
*Mat.*7.29. *authority*, i. e with pious ardency, and uncommon majesty, with perswasive eloquence, and the most forceable energy. So of the Apostle 'tis said, that, *as his manner was, he reasoned with*
Act. 17. 2. *the people out of the Scriptures*; that he *reasoned*
—18. 4. in the Synagogue every Sabbath, and *perswaded* the Jews and the Greeks; i. e. He set things in the clearest *light* to the eye of the *understanding*, offered the most convincing *demonstration* to the *judgment*, and address'd the *affections* in the most *sensible* and *moving* manner, to rouse and engage them: and by this rule he resolved to try and examin the Preaching of those *flourishing*, & *fine-*

spun

ſpun Doctors at Corinth, who ſo excell'd in the charms of a ſmooth and plauſible tongue; *I will come* (ſays he) *to you ſhortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the ſpeech of them that are puffed up, but the power, for the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.* The excellency and efficacy of preaching does not lie in an accumulation of fine phraſes and elegant ſentences. The moſt *elaborate contexture* of ſoft and faſhionable *words*, and harmonious periods, without a good blaze of *tho't*, a bright flame of *reaſon*, the vital Spirits of *ſound* underſtanding, and the ſinews of good argumentation, is but a *lifeleſs image*, or *a flatulent ſhell*, without ſolidity, or ſtrength; like an Edifice with painted walls, without pillars, and ſet on a weak ſandy foundation, of little ſervice, and ſhort ſtanding, eaſily pelted down, and then all evaporates into duſt and ſmoak. Even ſo *vain* and *inſignificant* is the greateſt *pomp* of words, in a Sermon, pack't together without the *nerves* and *ſubſtance* of ſolid reaſon. 1 Cor. 4. 19, 20.

MINISTERS then in Preaching muſt labour, to *digeſt* the materials into good *order*, to make all things *plain, obvious* and *intelligible* to the mind, and to recommend them to the conſcience, and practic powers, with *ſatisfactory evidence*, and the moſt *winning* force of perſuaſion.

THUS, as to the Style, method and ſpirit, the *outward* dreſs and *inward* frame of their Public Diſcourſes.

3 *THE delivery*, and *outward geſtures* muſt be *natural, unaffected, grave and decent.*

(1.) THE *voice* muſt be well-govern'd and form'd to an *audible, diſtinct, warm and affectionate* pronunciation. If the ſubject-matter be never ſo ſubſtantial and edifying, and the ſtyle, method and argument framed to all poſſible advantage,

yet an *awkward and unpleaſant ſound*, or any conſiderable *indecency* in the *prolation* of a diſcourſe may marr *the goodlineſs of the faſhion thereof*, ſcreen the vigorous flame, and give a chilling damp, and ſuſpenſion to the moſt ſprightly pulſe. Great care then ou't to be taken to *tune*, and *modulate* the voice to a pleaſing utterance and agreeable elocution; this will add a wonderful *grace* and *force* to the whole, and be a good *ſeaſoning* to the moſt accurate *compoſition*.

(2.) THE *geſtures* muſt be compos'd to a *decent gravity*. The public exerciſes muſt be managed with a *becoming mine*, and the moſt profound *ſeriouſneſs*, to give them weight, influence and authority. Some kind of *poſtures* and *motions* there be, which are of the moſt *unpleaſing* aſpect and appearance to the Spectators; which ſuggeſt *improper* reflections to *corrupt* fancys, and are *too* often the *criminal* occaſions of that *contempt*, under which *Religion* groans. Theſe things very much *abaſe* the majeſty of the Pulpit, *degrade* the dignity of a venerable inſtitution, and put a
1 *Cor.* 1. 21. ſtrong *temptation* before ſome to cry out,— *This*
Act. 17. 18. *fooliſhneſs of Preaching*! *What wou'd the Babler ſay?* Therefore in point of *prudence*, Miniſters muſt ſtudy to compoſe their *looks* and form their *behaviour* to the utmoſt *decency* and moſt *ſolemn air*, as they wou'd not *defeat* their great *deſign*, *unravel* their work, and *prevent* the good entertainment of their meſſage.

To proceed,

§. 3. *MINISTERS muſt be very wiſe in managing their applications in private, and leſs public dealings with Souls.*

A Miniſter's work do's not *all* lie in the *Study* and *Pulpit*. 'Tis not a *bare* preparing for, and circulating thro' the common *Set* of public exerciſes,

erciſes, that is a *fulfilling the Miniſtry*; but proper occaſions are to be wiſely *choſen*, and faithfully *improved* for more *retir'd* endeavours. Miniſters can't ſpeak with that *pungency*, *plainneſs* & *freedom* to ſome *certain* caſes in *public*, as they can in *private*; and what is ſometimes more *generally* treated of in the Houſe of God, may be *proſecuted*, the blow be followed, in *particular* addreſſes to *Perſons*, and *Families* by themſelves. And indeed a leſſon in a *few* words *immediately* directed and ſet *home* in a proper manner, yea a ſober *check* or ſolemn *hint* let drop *by the by*, in ordinary converſe at *ſome critical* junctures, will *frequently* have a more happy *impreſſion*, and affecting *influence*, than a *formal*, *labour'd ſpeech* to people in *common*. *Hence*, we read of the wiſe and holy *Apoſtles*, that not only *daily in the temple*, but *in every houſe*, *they ceaſed not to teach and preach Jeſus Chriſt*. And thus Paul the unweary'd Apoſtle and faithful in all things, ſolemnly appealed to the Elders and People at Miletus, *Ye know*, *after what manner I ve been with you at all ſeaſons*,—*how I have taught you publickly*, *& from houſe to houſe* And *conformable* to his example is that exhortation of his to Timothy, *Preach the word*, *be inſtant in ſeaſon*, *out of ſeaſon*, i. e. (I preſume,) in a *fixt*, *ſtated* courſe in *public*, & alſo *occaſionally*, at all convenient opportunities, in *private*. Private inſpection, or Paſtoral viſitation is of neceſſity to the ſame purpoſes, as the public adminiſtrations. *Hence*, we have *Miniſters* deſcribed under *this* Character,—*The watch-men*, *that go about the City*; and 'tis *obſervable* what follows, they *found me*, ſaith the Spouſe; *they* found out her, and not *ſhe* them,—a plain *intimation*, that the Miniſters of the Goſpel muſt diligently *ſeek out*, and *look up the wandering*, *& ſtraying*, & *maintain a watchful inſpection over their flocks*, even as the good

2 *Tim.* 4. 5.

Act. 5. 42.

Act. 20. 20.

2 *Tim.* 4. 2.

Cant. 3. 3.

good *Shepherd* looks after his Sheep, going *about*, and taking *particular* notice of all; or as the *Husbandman* walks about in his garden, & fields, to obſerve the growth, and decays of things, and make all needful and ſuitable applications. *Hence*, Miniſters muſt *arm* themſelves with a becoming *courage* and *reſolution*, and ſhake off that *falſe* modeſty, that tame and and vicious *dread* of offending Men. which too often wretchedly prevales to the *intire omiſſion*, or but *ſorry performance* of this neceſſary and important duty; and apply themſelves with all fidelity, and holy boldneſs hereunto. But then, they muſt take heed to manage all with utmoſt *prudent caution, and diſcretion*; careful not to uſe *the inſtruments of a fooliſh Shepherd*, but in all points to *concert* ſuch meaſures, and *improve* ſuch means, as are *beſt* adapted to anſwer the end, that their work may ſucceed.

Zech 11. 15

1. IN *adminiſtring reproofs to offenders*— Wiſdom requires due care, that a proper *decorum* be obſerved, in addreſſing Men according to their different *Styles*, and *external* character, and quality. *An Elder* (ſays the Apoſtle in his directions to Timothy) *rebuke* not, but *intreat him as a Father*— Elders in *age, gifts or office* are not to be *inſulted* and *outrag'd* with magiſterial cenſures, and unmannerly ſatyr, with rough imperious auſterity, and a rude aſſuming air of ſuperiority, but to be treated with due *diſtance & deference* in proportion to civil difference, and diſtinctions. Wiſe *Nathan* in admoniſhing King *David*, has left an *Example* of miniſterial *humility and reſpect*, worthy of every one's imitation.

1 *Tim.* 5. 1.

AGAIN, Prudence will direct them to ſee to it, that the *charge* proceed upon *reality*, (1) an *overt, viſible fault*, & (then) *full convincing evidence*. They muſt take care, *not* to charge Perſons *at random*, or

or on *every light* occaſion. They muſt *take heed*, how they rebuke a *pityable weakneſs*, and how they denominate any act a *crime* by an *ill gloſs*, or *perverſe innuendo's:* and then, they muſt *ſee to* it, they go upon *ſubſtantial* grounds and *plain matter of fact*, and beware, how they draw the bow upon bare *ſurmiſe*, or doubtful *report*, and hear-ſay, leſt all be ſtigmatiz'd as meddling *curioſity*, or unchriſtian *calumny*.

AGAIN, Wiſdom will awaken a juſt concern, & direct how, to *ſuit* the reproof to the *temper* of the *Perſon*, & *proportion* it to the *quality* of the *offence*. As *Phyſicians* in their applications conſult the *conſtitution* of the Patient, with the *nature*, & *degree* of the diſtemper; ſo *Miniſters* muſt ſtudy the *tempers* of Men, and the *ſize* of their guilt, and make a *difference* in treating with 'em as their *reſpective* caſes demand. As to ſome, gentle *lemtives* are proper and expedient. *Reprehenſive* adminiſtrations muſt *ſometimes* be *daſh*'d with an infuſion of ſpiritual *ſuavities*, to give them a *better* reliſh; the *unpleaſant* hook muſt be baited with *artificial guiſes*, and ſet off with a *ſpecious air*, that it may with *leſs reluctance* be taken down; even as the *work-man*, that wo'd drive his *nail* home with *leſs* difficulty, firſt dips it in *oyl*. *Others* muſt be handled with ſharp, and ſtinging *Corroſives*. Some *Maladies* require ſtronger Phyſic, and ſome *conſtitutions* will bear a bigger potion, than others. An *inveterate, and impoſtumated* wound muſt be lanced to the *quick*, and dealt more *roughly* with, than a *green* & *ſlight* ſcratch. Accordingly the Apoſtle gives that direction to *Titus* concerning ſome *unſound* and *corrupt* Profeſſors—*Rebuke them ſharply*. In ſome caſes, there muſt be ſome *keenneſs* & poignance, ſome warmth and ſmartneſs, to ſtrike proper convictions into the ſecure mind, and faſten

Tit. 1. 13.

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an admonition on the brawny Conſcience: The
2 *Cor* 13. 10 arrow muſt be drawn up *to the head*, and diſcharged with *Spirit* and vigour, *according to the power, which the Lord hath given to edification, and not to deſtruction.* Ironical Jeers and the vibrations or jerks of a flurting tongue may *tickle*, but not *terrify*, and rather recreate than reform. "A *nibbling*, or *ſquibbing* kind of reproof, is like an *ignis*
Jude 22, 3. *lambens*, as ſoon *off*, as *on*." *Of ſome* (ſays the Apoſtle) *have compaſſion, making a difference*, but *others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; i.e. in *haſte & by force*, without compliment or formality, as one wou'd *ſnatch* up another, that's fallen into the flames. *However*, They muſt always *beware*, their *zeal* and *aſperity* do not degenerate into *fury*, and *invenom'd bitterneſs*. Real *neceſſity* muſt ever be the *parent* of heat & ſeverity; and *this* muſt be temper'd, and directed by *Wiſdom*.

AGAIN, *Prudence* muſt *govern* in the choice of a *proper ſeaſon*. There's a ſtrange *diverſity* in the humours, and inclinations of a Man at *diſtinct* times, and under *different* circumſtances. There are particular *mollia fandi tempora*, certain *calm and lucky* ſeaſons, when a *tender touch* will lodge a more *ſenſible and laſting impreſſion*, than an *heavy blow* at *other* times; when a word ſhall be ſpoken
Prov 25. 11 upon *Wheels* (as 'twere) and ſhall glide with *facility and ſpeed* into the conſcience; ſhall *grate* on the *darling luſt*, and not awaken *undue reſentments*. *A word thus fitly ſpoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*; how *goodly and beautiful*? *As*
ver. 12. *an ornament of gold, ſo is a word in ſeaſon, and a wiſe reproof upon an obedient ear: but as vinegar upon nitre*, ſo is a reproof *out* of ſeaſon; *'tis like a foot out of joint*, like *burning coals, and wood to fire*, often
Amos 5. 10. times. They that *rebuke in the gate* muſt therefore *watch for*, and *embrace* the moſt *ſeaſonable* opportunities.

portunities. *The faithful, and wiſe Servant* will endeavour to do all *in due ſeaſon.* *Mat* 24.45

2. *IN defending truth againſt the invaſions of error,* (which is one peculiar branch of the work of *Miniſters*) They muſt (1.) Let *Prudence* ſingle out the *Antagoniſt*, one of *temper and integrity of parts, and modeſty*: for *ſome* there are, the *diſputers of this* World, *unreaſonable* Men, who will bark and bawle, and make a perpetual larum, *whoſe tongues* ſeem *to be ſet on fire of Hell*, are *unruly evils*, and *full of deadly poiſon*; *no* reaſon will *ſtop* their mouths, nor the moſt unanſwerable arguments put their *burning lips* to ſilence. *Theſe*, Miniſters will be wiſe to *avoid*, rather than to exulcerate the ſpirit of deluſion, boil up the fumes of their unſanctify'd ſpleen, and raiſe a clamour: for thro' the weakneſs, and ſimplicity of the *common Herd*, impudent *noiſe*, and ſturdy *nonſenſe*, generally come off with *triumph*, and *One fool* wins *louder* Acclamations, than *Seven men that can render a reaſon.* *Again*, *Prudence* muſt direct, and chuſe the *ſeaſon.* The *calm* and *cool* of the day, when the mind is *open*, and *unclouded*, and the paſſions *ſedate* and *unruffled*, is the *beſt* time to enter the ſtage, and try the combat. *Again*, *Wiſdom* muſt preſide in ordering the *manner.* Points in difference muſt be ſtated with utmoſt *calmneſs*, and all poſſible *allowances*; and truth be defended under the united influences of *meekneſs* & *wiſdom.* *Tit.* 1. 9. 1 *Cor.* 1.20. 2 *Theſ* 3.2. *Jam.* 3. 6. *Prov* 26.23 The Wiſe Man obſerves, 'tis the *ſoft tongue* that *breaketh the bone*, that *diſſolves* the mind, & *bends* it by a ſtrange, and ſecret efficacy to the *acknowledging of truth*, commands the light to ſpring up and ſhine out of darkneſs, and gently rolls away the miſts of error and prejudice, even as the *riſing Sun*, ſilently ſhedding abroad its pleaſant beams, carries off the gloomy ſhades of the night, and *Prov* 23.15

chaſes away the morning-clouds without any buſtle or bluſtre. It becomes the *Advocates* of truth always to offer *unbroken reaſon*, (that ſhall maſter and over-match the underſtanding) ſoften'd with *calm perſuaſion*, (that will not alarm and chaſe the paſſions) ſo *debating in meaſure, ſtaying the rough wind*, and not blowing with too ſtiff a gale. Violent guſts too often make ſhipwreck of the Faith.

TO aſſume the *inſtructing and directing* of others, looks like an *uſurping juriſdiction* over their judgments, which Man's native pride can *hardly* ſtoop to; and therefore the *Embaſſadors* of Chriſt, when they undertake to *convince Gain-ſayers*, had need *ſet a watch before their mouths, and keep the door of their lips*, laying aſide all *hard* ſpeeches, & *grievous* words which do but *ſtir up anger*, and *lanch out* Men's inflamed reſentments. They may *contend earneſtly* for the Faith, and not charge with *thunder*, or ſpit the *venom* of untemper'd zeal, *which* is the grand *original* of moſt of thoſe ſad *confuſions*, that have ever infeſted the *Chriſtian World*. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God*, but too often *genders to more ungodlineſs, overthrowing the faith of ſome*, and confirming the *unbelief* of *others*, opening the ear to ſolliciting errors, and ſteeling the mind againſt the dint of ſound convictions.

Prov. 15. 1.

Jude 3.

Ja. 1. 20.

WHEN Men carry the *poiſon of aſps under their lips*, and are all wild-fire and flame, waſpiſh, and huffy, the *ſtrange* unhallowed *incenſe* of their *ſtormy paſſions*, and opprobrious *invectives* will darken the air, cloud the light, and *make the truth of God of none effect*.

Rom. 3. 13.

THE *Italians* have a Proverb, (I've ſomewhere met with) that, *Duro con duro non fat bon muro, hard ſtones heap'd up will not make a good wall*, without ſomething

ſomething of a more *plyant* quality to *cement* and bind them together.

3. *IN healing of wounded Conſciences.* They muſt labour (1.) to *diſcern* the true *ſtate* of the Perſon *diſtreſſed*—his natural temper, the nature, cauſe, degree, ſymptoms & prognoſtics of the ſpiritual diſeaſe labour'd under.

AGAIN, They muſt lead the *Patient* himſelf into a right *view* of his *own* circumſtances; and *this*, to diſpoſe him to receive advice and liſten to direction.

AGAIN, They muſt *time* their applications well. Generally the *ſooner*, the *better*, a *green* and *freſh* wound is *eaſier* heal'd, than an *old* and *feſter'd* one. A diſtemper ſeaſonably apply'd to in its ſtate of *infirmity*, may be *check'd* and *ſuppreſs'd*, which perhaps, if *neglected*, may ſoon *get head*, and run *beyond* the reach of *controll*. And ſome *critical* junctures there are, wherein there is a deſirable *concurrence* of moſt advantageous circumſtances to further and facilitate their operations. *Wiſdom* will *here* be needful and uſeful to direct.

AGAIN, *Wiſdom* muſt *regulate* the *manner* of their diſpenſations. All poſſible skill muſt be us'd, in *laying open* the wound, in *chuſing* the *methods* of cure, in *dreſſing* the ſore, and *applying* the means of healing. The wound muſt be *ſearch'd to the bottom*, but *Prudence* muſt *govern* and guide the *probe*, and manage the *inſtrument* with a *gentle* and *tender* hand. Spiritual Phyſicians muſt beware, leſt by *indirect* and *indiſcreet* methods they *ſhove* Men at any time into the *terrible convulſions* of *deſponding* fear, *ſtretch forth upon 'em the line of confuſion*, and lay them *gaſping* under the *impetuous ferment* of their *ill humours*, and *convictions*. And on the *other* hand they muſt *beware*, leſt by *improper* applications they *throw* Men (as 'twere) out of

a burning *fever* into a *lifeleſs palſey*; and deluge 'em in the *dead ſea* of ſecure *preſumption*; leſt
Ezek 17.16 they *ſee viſions of peace, where no peace is,* and *a time of health,* when the *day of trouble* muſt *abide*;
ver. 10. leſt they *daub with untempered mortar,* and *ſlightly heal the hurt of the daughter of my people,* ſaith the Lord, and ſo merely trucing the anguiſh or ſmart, and working only a *palliative,* or *ſuperficial* cure, the wound ſhou'd *rankle* within, the *clouds return after the rain,* and the *things that remain die* irrecoverably; and ſo " the *Phyſician* turn *Executioner.*

A *Miniſter* muſt *here* do all by *number, weight and meaſure,* holding the balances *even,* & meting out by a *juſt Ephah, dividing aright the word of truth,* opening the door of *hope,* or lifting up the gates of *fear,* as the matter requires; diſpenſing *terror* to whom *terror* belongs, *comfort* to whom *comfort,* giving to *ev'ry one* his *proper* ſhare, *as becomes a*
1 Pet. 4. 10. *good Steward of the manifold grace of God; by mani-*
2 Cor. 4. 2. *feſtation of the truth, commending himſelf to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God.*

THIS indeed is a *workman,* that *needs not to be aſhamed; a Scribe well inſtructed to the kingdom of God;*
Job 33. 23. *and an Interpreter, one among a thouſand! Can we*
Gen. 41. 38. *find ſuch a one as this, a man, in whom the ſpirit of God is—a man ſo diſcrete, and wiſe.*

THUS much for the *Second* particular.

3. OBSERVE, *The Apoſtle's Diligence, Zeal, and unwearied Activity in his holy calling;* whereunto I *labour, ſtriving,* ſays he. The firſt term [*labour*] bears *reference* to the *Husbandman,* whoſe work demands utmoſt *care* and vigilant *inſpection,* with painful patient *toil.* The other term [*ſtriving*] is an *alluſion* to the *Olympic games,* and the celebrated *Grecian* exerciſes *of old,* ſuch as *wreſtling, racing, cuffing,* &c. where ſeveral parties
1 Cor. 9. 25. *ſtrove* for the maſtery,—*agonized*—It *imports* the

moſt

moſt *intenſe* endeavour, a *ſtraining*, and *puſhing* forward and putting forth *all* one's might to *out do*. It ſpeaks a maſculine *valour*, and unſhock't *reſolution*, facing death, and defying danger, above the power of *charms* or *frowns*.

AND *this* repreſentation the *Apoſtle* elſewhere *juſtify's*, where he gives us a detail of his ſervices and ſufferings, and his inflexible, unmov'd courage under all. *In labours* (ſays he) *more abundant than any of them, in journeying often, in deaths more frequent, in wearineſs and painfulneſs, in watchings oft, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold & nakedneſs, and beſides theſe things that are without, that which cometh on me daily, the care of all the Churches: but none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear to myſelf, that I may finiſh my courſe with joy.* Such a *frame, ſpirit, and unmoveable application* to their work, well becomes all *the Miniſters* of the Goſpel. 2 Cor. 11. Act. 20. 24.

DOCT. *LABORIOUS diligence, fervor, and indefatigable application, ſhou'd be the Character of ev'ry Goſpel-Miniſter.*

TO be *oſcitant, drowzy and indifferent* in their *awful* ſervice, is a *reflection* on their *Maſter*, a *diſparagement* to their *profeſſion*, and will *defeat* their *expectation*, and the *end* of their *Miniſtry*. Their *Station* is a ſtage of *action*, a *flowing* ſcenes, & ſcene of boundleſs *labours*, of that *importance* & weight, that they wou'd *ſuit* the Grandeur of the *brighteſt Intelligences* in the excellent Glory, and *then*, ſo *hard* and difficult, *attended* with ſuch *burdens*, and uneaſy fatigues, as call for the *patience* and *the powers of the World to come*. The inſpired *Apoſtle* under this apprehenſion, *brake forth* into that ſolemn *expoſtulation*—*Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* 2 Cor. 2. 16. Here the *moſt improved* talents bear *no* proportion. Here the *brighteſt* Intellectuals will ſometimes be

ſtrangely

strangely put upon the *rack*; and the most volatile, *sanguine* and athletic Genius be *foil'd* and *baffil'd* and *expire* in impotent, successless *essays*.

IT is no *easy* and *light* matter to provide oneself with such a *stock* of good *knowlege*, as is requisite to make one *apt to teach*, to enable one to *give the sense of the Law*, to *convince Gainsayers*, *to speak a word in season to him that is weary*, *to edify the Body of Christ*, and to *make one ready to every good word and work*; no, but *much* labour, and the *most awakened* intention are *necessary* to this end, whatever an *illiterarian*, *enthusiastic* spirit may *surmise*. It is glaring *impudence*, and daring *presumption* to dream of *immediate irradiation* from above. The *deep* things of God must be *digg'd* out, and fetch'd up from the mine in the *common* way of study, reading, and converse, with Prayer for a blessing on the means improv'd. *Hence*, the *Apostle* exhorted *Timothy*; *Meditate on these things*, *give thy self wholly to them*. *Be in them* (as the original has it) bend all your powers to a close and diligent inquisition into these things. *Agreeably* the Apostle *himself* sat an *example*; He could not *live* without *study*, he could not *die* without his *books and parchments*, which he sends for, from his *Prison*, (no *proper* place (one wou'd think) to *study in*) under the *near* views of his approaching *departure*. The most *elevated* capacity, that wears the sacred Character, needs *still further* advances in *knowlege*. *Hard Study*, then, is the *duty* of all, and tho' this be a *weariness to the flesh*, yet they that have the *true spirit of their calling*, will account it their *meat* and *drink*, and its *own exceeding great reward*.

1 Tim. 2. 24.
Neh. 8. 8.
Isai. 50. 4.
1 Tim. 4. 15.
2 Tim. 4. 13 conf. cum. ver. 6.
Eccl. 12. 12

AGAIN, There is a *large* circle and variety of *public administrations*, and *private dispensations* to the Flock: which demand the *joynt* influences of *light and labour*, and require the *loins of the mind* to be

be perpetually *girded about*, and the *active* powers continually upon the *wing and ſtretch*; that Miniſters be *burning and ſhining Lights*, well-ſtor'd with *pure oyl-olive, beaten, to keep the lamps of the taber-nacle always burning*, and that they *move* in their reſpective orbs, as *the Sun, which is as a Bridegrom coming out of his chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race*; it ſeems as 'twere, to *leap* and *ſparkle* with rays of joy, when it riſeth to it's work, and *runs its courſe* with admirable *ſteadineſs, conſtancy*, and inimitable *celerity*: So Miniſters muſt be *flames of fire, cloathed with zeal*, in their Maſter's work; Men of unſtiffen'd *agility*, and quick *diſpatch*, laying *aſide* every *weight* to run the race ſet before 'em; Men of *exalted vigour*, and *unwavering ſtanch reſolution*; *not ſlothful in buſineſs, but fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*; *delivering all the counſel of God, affirming conſtantly*, the *whole* truth, *each* truth in its *proper ſeaſon*, and *nothing but* the truth; giving out *line upon line, and precept upon precept*, *labouring* in the word and doctrine, miniſtring to ev'ry one according to their neceſſity, capacity and appetite; *being inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, always abounding* in the work of the Lord; *travailing in birth until Chriſt* be *form'd* in Souls; *fighting the good fight of faith*, with unchill'd ardour, and fidelity unwarp'd, *reſiſting unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin*; nothing being able to unfix their conſtancy, to ſlacken their endeavours, or juſtle 'em out of the line of duty.

Exod. 27. 20. *Pſal.* 19. 5. *Act.* 26. 27. 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. 1 *Cor.* 15. 58 *Gal.* 4. 19. *Heb.* 12. 4.

THE *Glory* of *God* who employs them, the *neceſſity* & *dignity* of the *Souls* entruſted to their care, the *object* and *end* of their *Miniſtry*, do with united importunity call *for*, and ſpeak their obligations *to*, ſuch zeal, watchful concern, and ſedulous attendence on their work. Without this, they'l never be able to rive Men off from their beloved

beloved luſts, or to form the divine image in any Soul. The word is often "like a hollow ſound in the air", which ſoon languiſhes and expires: The *Hammer* of the Lord finds the *heart* of Man, *obdurate* as the *Stone*, unſuſceptible of any impreſſions; or *unſtable* as *water*, the traces made on it are quickly effaced; or like *melted wax*, which *now* turns as clay to the Seal, but *by & by* it *hardens again* and becomes impenetrable, that *the Founder melts in vain.* *Jer.* 6. 29. Theſe conſiderations challenge of the ſpiritual Artificers, a *fervent* induſtry and *moſt indefatigable* applications; as they *wou'd not* entirely *forfeit* the efficacy of their attempts, and in all things come ſhort of the Glory of God. For the lazy *drone*, as well as the contemtible *weakling*, muſt needs be *unequal* to this arduous and difficult task.

IV. OBSERVE, The *deſign and intention* of the Apoſtle in all his adminiſtrations— *that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus.* What *he aim'd at*, was to lead men into a ſaving acquaintance and living union with Chriſt, to liſt them into His ſervice, to mould them into His image, to *take 'em off* from the *old ſtock* of *corrupt nature*, and to *inſert* them into the *true Vine*, and then to advance ſuch to a ſpiritual *maturity*, to *build them up* on their moſt holy Faith, an habitation for the Lord thro' the Spirit, fitly framing them together, and helping them to *grow up* in all things into Him, who is the head, and in the *final upſhot*, to preſent them *compleat in Chriſt*, when the *top* of the noble ſtructure ſhall ſoar as high as *Glory*. *Joh.* 15. 1. *Jud. ver.* 20 *Eph.* 1. 22.

UNTO *this* was the bent and ambition of his Soul; this was the vital motive of all his ſtudy, and diffuſive labours. The pulſe of his heart beat high and ſtrong in deſires to do good; his breaſt flow'd with pious concern, and was fir'd with a

moſt

moſt lifey *zeal* to *ſerve and ſave Souls*, enkindled with a *coal* from off the *Altar*, intirely *pure* from the *ſmoak* of corrupt and dark *deſigns*.

SEE thoſe pathetical breathings of his *diſ-intereſted*, affectionate Soul,— " Our mouth is open 2*Cor.*6.11.
" unto you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is en- 2*Cor.*13.9.
" larged: This we wiſh even *your* perfection.
" I pleaſe all men in all things not ſeeking mine 1*Cor*10.23
" *own* profit, but the profit of many, that they
" may be ſaved. And elſewhere, I've coveted no *Act.*20.33.
" man's gold, or ſilver, or apparel. Did I
" make a *gain* of you, or of Men ſou't I *glory?* 2*Cor*13.17
" I ſpeak before God in Chriſt, I do all things,
" dearly beloved, for *your* edifying. Being affecti- 2*Cor*12.19
" onately deſirous of *you*, we are willing to im- 1*Theſ.*2.8.
" part not the Goſpel only, but our own Souls,
" becauſe *ye* are *dear* unto us; for God is my *Phil.* 1.8.
" record, how greatly I long after you, in the
" bowels of Chriſt. I wou'd gladly ſpend & be 2*Cor*12.14,
" ſpent for you, & you are in our hearts to live 15 —7.3.
" and die for you, tho' the more abundantly I
" love you, the leſs I be loved; for I ſeek not
" *your's* but *you*; labouring night & day, I preach
" unto you the Goſpel of God (always in every *Phil.* 1.4.
" prayer alſo for you all, praying exceedingly) 1*Theſ*3.10
" that I might perfect that which is lacking in ——8
" your faith; for now we live, if ye ſtand faſt
" in the faith, we are glad when we are weak, 2*Cor.*13.9.
" and ye are ſtrong. For what is our hope, or
" joy, or crown of rejoycing? Are not even 1*Theſ.* 2.
" ye in the preſence of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt at
" his coming?

WHAT an uncommon pitch of divine *heroiſm* is here? What ſublime ſtrains of true *generoſity*, and the moſt noble *chaſtity* of *intention*?

AND *this* bright *Example* preaches to *all* the *Miniſters* of Chriſt this moſt important *Doctrine*.

DOC. *THAT in all their ministerial labours, they should make the conversion, and edification of Men in Christ, their governing view, and sov'reign aim.* (I don't mean in contradistinction to the Glory of God, but to poral interest, honour, &c.)

THIS divine and excellent end, *the good of Souls*, must be *primary* in their intentions; This must give *law* and *life* to all their administrations. They must *enter upon* the Ministry with *this* exalted view, and *this* must be the master *spring* of their *motion in* it. *All* their *labours* in the *word and doctrine*, in *prayer*, in *government*, &c. are (like so many lines falling into a centre) all to *conspire* and *meet* in *this* generous design; and all *private* advantages are readily to be *sacrificed* for the promoting of it.

THUS runs the Apostle's solemn *charge* in this matter—*Feed the Flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over God's heritage.* Hence, Ministers must neither *engage*, nor *act* in this work from the low principle of *necessity*, (to get a living; *crouching for a piece of silver, saying, put me into the priest's office that I may eat a morsel of bread,*) nor from the simoniacal incentives of paltry *avarice* (*teaching for hire and divining for money, thirsting after the wages of unrighteousness, and running greedily after the errors of Balaam, for a reward*) nor from the false scent of popular *applause*, (led by the bait of *honour*, hunting after a *name*, putting on the solemn airs of the Zealot, & acting a part with subtil artifice, out of a *vain-glorious* ostentation; *Preaching Christ even of envy & strife; not sincerely*, but in *pretence zealously affecting men, but not well, walking in craftiness to draw away disciples after 'em*) nor from the *lust* of *dominion*, (*loving to have the pre-eminence* a

1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.
1 Sam. 2.
Mic. 3. 11.
Jude 11.
Phil. 1. 15.
Gal. 4. 17.
2 Cor. 4. 2.
3 Joh. 9.

and to *lord* it over *God's heritage*, and to walk in an empty ſhew. *Theſe* are four *abominations*, that defile the tabernacle of the Lord, ſtain the Prieſthood, and are the blackeſt proſtitution of the Miniſterial character: and to be abhor'd and abandon'd, as *earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh*, as what ſink men into the *line* of *Judas*, *Demas* & *Diotrephes*, which were ſome of the *dreggs* of the children of corruption, and into the doleful clan of voracious *Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, who devoured widows houſes, and for a pretence made long prayers, & loved the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God, and therefore receive the greater damnation.* *Neh.* 13.29 *Mat* 23.14

UNCOUNTERFEIT *ſelf-denial* then is an *important* leſſon; and 'tis of the *laſt* concern to *Miniſters*, that they *don't* give way to a *mercenary*, or a *ſelf-exalting* ſpirit, *not uſing at any time a cloke of covetouſneſs, not uſing their liberty for a cloke of maliciouſneſs*, nor a cover to *diſguiſe* any *ſervile*, and *ſordid* affections whatever. The *great Judge* has a Window into the *breaſt*, and can *ſee thro'* the *moſt finiſht* piece of refined *hypocriſy* into the *impure ſcenes* acted in the *ſecret receſſes* of the mind, *which no mortal eye hath ſeen, or can ſee*: and the awful *day* is coming, when *the fire ſhall try every mans work of what ſort it is*, and in *this* ſhall the *Children of God* be manifeſt and the *Children of the Devil*, whoſoever hath *not* preached Chriſt in *ſimplicity and godly ſincerity*, but with *fleſhly wiſdom*, handling the word *deceitfully*, *is not of God*, and muſt take his portion with the *unprofitable ſervant*, and with them, unto whom the Judge will ſay, *I never knew you!* 1 *Theſ.* 2.5. 2 *Cor.* 3. *Mat.* 25. ——7.23.

MINISTERS then muſt act all from a *natural care* for Souls, & with an inviolable regard to the Glory of God in the Converſion of Sinners, & the Edification of Saints, as they would *approve* themſelves *Phil.* 2.20.

ſelves unto God, and have even their *moſt abundant* labours be of *any account* in the day of retribution.

V. OBSERVE, The Apoſtle *deriv'd all his miniſterial accompliſhments from Jeſus Chriſt*— He preach'd in *wiſdom*, and with diligent *labour*, *according* to the *working of Chriſt*. All his *talents* and *abilities*, his knowledge, prudence, zeal, fidelity, ſedulity &c. were of the operation of *Chriſt*, and the effuſions of His free bounty. *Hence*, elſewhere he ſays, *I thank Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, who *hath enabled me*, furniſh'd me to the work of the Miniſtry with ſuitable endowments. *I was made a Miniſter of the Goſpel, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.*

1 *Ti.* 1. 12.

Eph. 3. 7.

Note, 'TIS *Chriſt*, who *fits* and *qualifies* Miniſters for the Sacred truſt and duty.

Col. 1. 19. IN *Him*, it hath pleaſed the Father, ſhou'd dwell the *treaſures of wiſdom, riches of glory*, and the *fulneſs* of everlaſting *ſtrength*, to *furniſh* their *whole* man, both the *directive* and *executive* powers; and *no* man receives *any* thing, but what *comes down* from *above*, from the *Father of Lights*, unto whom are owing ev'ry *good gift*, and *every perfect gift*.

Jam. 1. 17.

Job 32. 8. *'Tis the inſpiration of the Almighty, that begets underſtanding, and the unction from the Holy One*, that gives the *ſpirit of a ſound mind*. He puts the treaſure in the earthen veſſels, and lights up the lamps of the ſanctuary, and keeps them burning. Miniſters are Stars, ſhining with light borrow'd from the Sun of Righteouſneſs. He ſets *forth*, and ſets *forward* the ſpiritual *Racer*. He *ſpirits* and *equips* the ſpiritual *Soldier*, provides him with *arms and artillery*, inſpires him with military *art and dexterity*, gives him martial *proweſs* to *ſpeak with the enemies in the gate*, and girds him with

Pſal. 127. 5

with *ſtrength unto the battle*, and makes his way perfect. *'Tis Chriſt the Lord, that doth all theſe things.*

HENCE, It *behoves* Miniſters to be *very much* in the exercise of *Prayer*. They that wou'd become fit for, and faithful in the Miniſtry of the word, muſt *give themſelves to prayer continually*. *Act.* 6 4. The *prayer* of the *upright*, is the moſt likely method to procure the *tongue of the learned*, the *diligent hand*, & an *able head*. The more *fervent* and *frequent* one is at the throne of Grace, the *better proſpect* he has of *excelling in ſtrength*, of growing *mighty in the Scriptures*, and *skilful in the word of righteouſneſs*. To be often in the *mount*, having his *converſation* much in *Heaven*, will admirably both *irradiate*, and *warm* him in his work, will make his *affections* glow with an holy *heat*, and his *mind* ſparkle with rays of glorious *light*, even as the face of *Moſes* when he had been with God *Ex.* 34. 35. in *Sinai*.

AGAIN, *Hence* Miniſters muſt be *contented* with their Lord's diſpenſations and allotments to them. He is *Maſter* of his *own* favours, and according to the counſel of his own will he makes *one ſtar to differ from another in glory, dividing to every man ſeverally as he pleaſeth. To one* he gives *five talents, and to another one*. The Sovereign Potter forms the *holy Veſſels* of the temple with a juſt and admirable *variety*, as to *the make and conſtitution*, (This is finer and that courſer, this is weaker, that is ſtronger, this of gold, and that of ſilver, this of wood and that of earth,) and then, as to the *extent*, *capacity*, & *ſize*, as alſo to the *figure* and *faſhion*, *aptitude* and *uſefulneſs*, &c. And there is *none* may ſay unto Him, *What doeſt Thou?* or *Why makeſt Thou me thus?* *Iſai.* 45. 9.

1 *Cor* 12. 11 *Mat* 25. 15 2 *Ti.* 2. 20.

LET not, then, the *Men of low degree*, & of *ſmall* account in *their Father's Houſe*, who are forced

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to creep in the duſt, and lift up *plow-ſhares* and *pruning-hooks*, inſtead of *ſwords and ſpears*, I ſay, let not *us* look upon *our ſelves* with *diſcouragement* and *diſcontent*, neither with *envy* and *emulation* upon *others*, that move in an *higher* ſphere, diſtinguiſht with brighter viſions, and *more abundant honour*; for may *not the Lord do, what he will, with his own?* Let us be faithful in a little, and 'twill abound to our account. And on the *other* hand, let not *thoſe* deſpiſe the *leſs* noble, and *weaker veſſels*. Let not the *golden* Candleſticks look, either upon the *earthen* Lamps with ſupercilious *contempt*, or upon *themſelves* with elated *pride*; for *who maketh thee to differ?* and *what haſt thou, that thou didſt not receive?* Now, *if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory?* Let ſuch, as perch on the *pinacle* of the temple, *take heed*, leſt they grow *giddy* at any time, and give the *Prince of the power of the air* an advantage againſt them. *Pride goes before a fall.*

Mat 20.15

1 Cor. 4.7.

VI. OBSERVE *The extraordinary divine* Aids, and *happy* Succeſs *graciouſly vouchſaf'd the faithful Apoſtle*—Striving (ſays he) according to His working, which worketh *in me mightily*. This may be conſidered under a *double* aſpect, as intimating his *Aſſiſtence* in his Miniſtry, and the *Succeſs* of it. The Lord wro't *in* him mightily, and *by* him upon others ſavingly.

1. WE may underſtand by it the *Aſſiſtences* he met with, the *ſupplies* of grace and ſtrength he received from above, from the fulneſs of Chriſt. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt did furniſh this great Apoſtle at *firſt* with an unuſual *ſtock* of divine gifts and graces to trade with for his *Maſters uſe*, but *this* wou'd ſoon have been *impoveriſh't* and *exhauſted* with his more abundant fatigues, ſufferings, ſervices and cares, had he not been *recruit-*

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ed with *freſh* ſupplies from the Head of Influences. Without a flow of ſap from the root of Jeſſe, and the vivific beams of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* to animate, ſtrengthen, and ſuſtain, *this* moſt *fruitful Vine* wou'd ſoon have *withered*, his excellent gifts been under a blaſt, and the fair bloſſoms have dropt off. This *poliſhed ſhaft* and moſt *pretious* of the *Sons of Zion* wou'd quickly have degenerated into an *earthen pitcher*; the gold have become dim, and the fine gold changed. *Jer.* 49. 2. *Lam.* 4.

BUT *this* was *his* happineſs and honour; He had the *grace* of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* continually *burniſhing* and brightening up his *talents*, divine virtue from on high *preſerving* & *improving* them, the ſpirit of Chriſt *abiding in him*, invigorating him by powerful aſſiſtences, every way *ſufficient for him*; ſo that he, who was *not ſufficient of himſelf*, was *full* of *power* by the *Spirit of the Lord of Hoſts, ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might*; and when he was *preſſed* out of meaſure, and *above ſtrength* by labours, and troubles, yet he did *not faint*, nor *fail*, but *performed* all things, *endured* all things, thro' *Chriſt ſtrengthning of him*, and *working in him mightily*. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *Mic.* 3. 8. 2 *Cor.* 1. 8. *Phil.* 4. 13.

NOW, Theſe things were written for *our* conſolation & encouragement, upon whom the ends of the World are come, that we ſhould not fear nor be diſmay'd at any time.

HENCE, then, we may take up this uſeful *Obſervation*, namely, That *Faithful* Miniſters *may expect from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt all thoſe ſupplies both of ſkill and ſtrength, they need in order to the fulfilling their Miniſtry.*

SUCH, as are *true Men*, and *faithful Servants*, may depend upon Him, that has put 'em into a military condition, for all the aſſiſtence, they need in order to the *warring a good warfare*. He will 1 *Tim.* 1. 18

will teach their fingers to fight, and the arms of their hands ſhall be made *ſtrong* by the mighty God of Jacob; He will annoint them with *freſh* oyl, and *renew* their bow in their hand, will make them a *new heart*, and *new ſpirit*, give *power* *Iſai* 40. 29. to 'em, when they are *faint*, and when they've —*ver.* 31, *no might*, *increaſe* of ſtrength. They that wait *Rom.* 12. 7. upon the Lord, that *wait on their Miniſtry*, ſhall *renew* their *ſtrength* as the *Eagles*, and mount up with wings; They ſhall *walk* and *not faint*, *run* and *not* be *weary*, being upheld by the greatneſs of *his* might, who is *head over all*, and *without whom* (the mouth of truth hath ſpoken it) they *Joh.* 15. 5, *can do nothing*. They are *his Embaſſadors*, and as long as they act by *his* authority, and keep to their *credentials*, He will bear them *up*, and bear 'em *out*; "He will ſtrive *with* them, and work *for* them". The *fountain* of *Jacob* ſhall *cover* 'em, and *underneath* be *his* everlaſting arms. The *bleſſing* of *Aſher* ſhall come upon them, *as their days are, ſo ſhall* *Deut.* 33. *their ſtrength be*. The God of *Jeſhurun* will be their *refuge* and the *ſhield of their help*; *His ſtrength* ſhall 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. be made perfect *in their weakneſs*. Refreſhment ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord, the Heavens ſhall drop down dew, & the Sun afford ſuperiour influence to help their infirmities, and impregnate them with vigour and reſolution to carry on their work. *He*, who *walks in the midſt* *Rev.* 2. 1 *of the golden Candleſticks*, will *hold the Stars in the* *Iſai.* 49. 7. *ſhadow of his right hand*, until he *ſhift* the ſcene and take 'em into his *boſom*, and heavenly embraces. Such truſt have we, thro' the promiſes, to Chriſt-ward.

2. I paſs now to the *other* ſenſe of the phraſe; *which worketh in me mightily*, i. e. with conquering efficacy, and apparent power, to purpoſe, with great *ſucceſs*. The pleaſure of the Lord

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proſpered in his hands, and the whole *efficiency* he reſolv'd into the *energetical preſence* of Chriſt with him. Hence *Note*, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Author of all ſucceſs in the work of the Miniſtry.* The *efficacy* of the Word preach't is *not* owing to the influence of *men's* wiſdom & eloquence: It do's not depend upon *dint* of *argument*, or the charms of *moral ſuaſion*, nor upon the *natural* energy, or virtue of the Word itſelf, or any *external* means; but 'tis to be attributed *intirely* to the ſpecial *operation* of *Chriſt*. *He* is the *author*, and *finiſher* of the whole *affair*, *effectually* working in his Miniſters; *in Peter to the Apoſtleſhip of the circumciſion, and the ſame was mighty in Paul towards the Gentiles.* Gal. 2. 8. He muſt both open *their lips* to ſpeak, and the *peoples hearts* to receive. A *door* muſt be opened of the *Lord*, a door of *utterance*, and a door of *entrance*. 2 Cor. 2. 12. The *Father of Glory* (with whom are the words of eternal life) muſt *utter* his voice, and that a *mighty* voice, *commanding the light to ſhine out of darkneſs*, elſe *the Sinner* in his frozen grave, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, on whom the ſhadows of the evening, and the chains of darkneſs are ſtretcht forth, will *not hear*, nor *open his eyes* to diſcern the things of God. *Unleſs* the *Sun of righteouſneſs ariſe* with *healing* under his wings, *anointing* their eyes with *eye-ſalve*, and taking off the ſcales, the *moſt bright and dignify'd Luminary's* in the *centre* of light and fulneſs of meridian glory, wou'd *never* be able to call men out of darkneſs into the marvellous light of the knowlege of God. "This *renovation* (*ſays a moſt reverend Divine*) is an inſtance of the *ſame* glorious power, which exerted itſelf in the *firſt Creation* of things, and in the *Reſurrection* of Chriſt, tho' not *altogether* after the ſame *manner*. "*This* change is called a *new creation*, as if---men were *moulded* and faſhioned over *again*, *transformed*---and

Jer. 6. 41

Rev. 3. 18.

1 Pet. 2. 9.

Vid. A. Bp. Tillotſon's 2d. Vol. Fol. pa. 369. & 370.

had *such* a change wro't in them, as the *creating* power of God made, in bringing this beautiful and orderly frame of things, out of their dark and rude *chaos*". *And like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also are raised to newness of life, according to the operation of his mighty power.*

Rom. 6. 4.

Eph. 1. 20.

THEREFORE, *Unless* the Creator of all the ends of the earth, the God who raiseth the dead, *reveal his arm*, and make known the *exceeding greatness* of his power; the *Prophets* shall become *wind*, and *none* shall *hearken* to the *sound of the trumpet*. *All* shall be like the *Adder*, *deaf to the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely*. *Ministers* are appointed to *edify* the Body of Christ: but *except the Lord build the house, They labour in vain*: and to *take heed* to the Flock of Christ, but *except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchman waketh but in vain*: and to *form Christ* in Sinners, but tho' they *rise up early, work while the day lasts, sit up late*, and *eat the bread of earnest care*; it will *all* be *fruitless* and *abortive*, unless the *power of the most High overshadow* the Souls of Men: and to *fight against principalities & powers*, (the powers of the *old*-man, and the confederate forces of the *strong* man armed,) but *unless* they *go forth* in the *strength of the Lord of Hosts*; they'l *only* make an empty flourish, and scuffle to no purpose. *Unless* the Light of Israel be for a fire, and his holy One for a flame; unless the Captain of the Host of the Lord ride on the heavens for their help, and in his excellency on the skies, shaking his hand against the haughty with terror, and hewing down the high ones of stature with iron, the army of the *aliens* will put the holy Tribe to the rout, consume their glory & sweep them away as a spider's web, either by strength or stratagem. The *Dragon* will *rage* & *tear* them

Job 12. 38, 9, 40.

Jer. 5. 13. ——6. 17.

Psal. 58. 45

Psal. 127. 1

Isai. 10. 17

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to pieces, or the *ſerpent* will *play* upon 'em & trepan 'em with his wiles, that *none* ſhall be *recovered out of the ſnare of the Devil*, for verily *this* is the work of the Lord of Hoſts, with whom is everlaſting ſtrength, who openeth his armour, and bringeth forth the weapons of righteouſneſs, *ſending judgment unto victory*. An arm of fleſh can give but feeble and ineffective blows; It's *utmoſt* efforts *alone* will make no more impreſſion upon *the habitation of the ſtrong*, than the light touch of one's finger upon a wall of ſtone. It is the *arm of the Lord that bringeth Salvation*, that breaks in pieces the *Leviathan*, and *taketh from him all his armour wherein he truſted*, and bringeth out his hoſt by number. *Jer.* 50.25. *Mat* 12.20 *Jer.* 49.19. *Iſai.* 63.5. *Luk.* 11.22

IF *he gird the ſword of truth on his thigh*, & ride forth in the Chariot of the everlaſting Goſpel, if he lift up his ſtandard and aſcend on high, he will make the place of his feet beautiful and glorious, and his right hand ſhall teach him terrible things, he will lead captivity captive, and make the enemy, that comes in as a flood to ſcatter and fly as a cloud, and Satan to fall like lightning from Heaven. He will turn the wiſe men back, and make their counſel fooliſhneſs, but *he will confirm the word of his ſervants, and perform the counſel of his meſſengers, by the greatneſs of his might*; for that *He* is ſtrong in power, *not one* faileth, where He *appoints* the Sword and gives it a charge. The *Archers* ſhall *not* return *aſhamed*; He will give the *enemy* as duſt to their ſpear, and as driven ſtubble to their bow, *in the day of his power*. Surely *then*, the *leaſt* of the Flock ſhall put a hook in the Lion's noſtrils and dragg him out of his den; the graſshoppers purſue the Anakims, and *two* put *ten thouſand* to flight; *thro' God* they ſhall do *valiantly*, who commandeth their ſtrength, and ſtrengthneth *Pſal.* 45.3. *Iſai* 59.19. *Luk.* 10.18 *Iſai.* 44.25. —40. 26. *Pſal.* 60.12 *Pſal.* 68.28

2Cor.2.14. that which he worketh for them; *In Christ they*
Gen.3.15. *shall triumph*, who breaketh the Serpents head, bruiseth Satan under their feet, reins in the power and malice of the *Wolves* that wou'd devour the
Psal.11.4. Flock, and who bows the heart of the people by the saving strength of his right hand, turning the rock into a standing water, and the flint into a fountain of rivers.

Rom.9.16. SO then *it is not in him that willeth, nor of him*
Eccl.9.11. *that runneth. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor yet favour to men of skill*; but
Prov16.33 when the lot is cast into the lap, the *whole* disposing thereof is of the *Lord*, and sometimes in-
Job 37.7. deed he is pleased to *seal* up the hand of *many*
1Cor.1.26. *wise men after the flesh*, and chuseth the *foolish* things of this world to *confound the wise*, & the *weak* things of this world to *bring to nought* the things which are *mighty, that no flesh should glory in his presence.* 'Tis to the honour of the Agent to work the noblest effects by contemtible & impropable means. Therefore *out of the mouth of Babes, & Sucklings he*
Psal. 8. 2. *ordains strength to still the enemy & the avenger*; and dignify's *despised, broken* vessels to be the *illustrious, and most effectual* instruments of his glory, *that all men may know his wo k*; and that their *faith* shou'd
1Cor. 2. 5. not stand in the *wisdom of man*, but in the *power of God*, which worketh all in all.

HENCE, Let Ministers be entirely resigned to Christ, the Lord of the Harvest, as to the fruit of their labours; Tho' they spend their strength for nought, and in vain all the day long stretch out their hand to a gainsaying and rebellious people, yet *surely*
Isai. 49.4. *their judgment is with the Lord*, and *their work with God.* If they *sow* much, tho' they *reap* little or nothing; tho' the *Vineyard* does not yield fruit
Heb. 6. 7. *meet for them, by whom 'tis dressed, not receiving the blessing from God*, but *degenerates* into an howling wilderness,

wilderneſs, or barren deſart, *bearing thorns and briars, nigh unto curſing*, or at moſt affords *only*, as 'twere, the *grape-gleanings of the vintage*, yet this may adminiſter *comfort* to the *faithful* Servants of Chriſt, that they've diſcharg'd their *duty* & acted *their* part, and the want of *ſucceſs* ſhall be *no bar* to their *acceptance*, *for they are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. Tho' Iſrael be not gathered, yet they are glorious in his eyes, with whom* they have to do, and tho' they loſe their *labour*, they ſhall not loſe their *reward*. *The battel is the Lord's, and not theirs*, he umpires the ſucceſs of every campaign, and if they are good *Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt*, tho' they do not *turn the battel to the gate*, and the *ſpirits* be *not ſubject* to them, yet *this* may be their *crown* of rejoycing, that *their names are written in heaven*; For in *this* caſe, *if there be firſt a willing mind*, and then a *diligent hand, it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not*. Their acceptance and reward is in proportion to the degree of their *care* and pains, and not to the *event* and *ſucceſs*; 'tis *meaſur'd* by their *fidelity*, and not by the *efficacy* of their labours, for *this* is *wholly* of the Lord, and their *ſufficiency is of God*.

—*ver.* 8. 2*Cor.*2.15. 2*Chr*20.15 *Iſai.* 28.6. *Luk.*10.20 2*Cor.*3. 5.

AGAIN, Hence, *Let Miniſters wait upon Chriſt for ſucceſs*. Thoſe, that labour in the harveſt, muſt *ſow in tears, and with ſtrong crying*, they muſt *ſteep* their *ſeed* in *prayer*, and ſeal inſtruction with ſupplication. They muſt aſcend on *Jacobs ladder* up to *mount Gerizzim* to fetch down a bleſſing on *Zion*, and her *proviſion*; upon *Levi*, and *his ſubſtance*, on the *fruit* of his lips, and the *work* of his hands. *For this*, they muſt with irreſiſtible importunity *beſiege* the *Throne of Grace*, *breath out* their *moſt ardent* requeſts, *agonize* with holy violence at the foot of the mercy-ſeat, *wreſtling* down from the Father

Father of Lights a *word of bleſſing* on their perſons and adminiſtrations, to *enrich* them unto all
2*Cor.*9.10. ability and ſucceſs, both *miniſtring bread for food, and multiplying their ſeed ſown, and increaſing the fruits of their righteouſneſs.*

Col. 4. 12. AND all this muſt be never-ceaſing and perpetual, even as *Epaphras* laboured *always* fervent-
*Ex.*17.11. ly in Prayers. If they *let down their hands, Amalek will prevail.* If then they expect and deſire to
1*Cor.*10.4. have the weapons of their warfare mighty thro'
—*ver.* 12. God, they muſt *hold up, and keep their hands ſteady until the going down of the ſun.* Thus the "Cloſet muſt crown the Field with ſucceſs.

AGAIN, Hence, *Let not people rely upon, nor glory in Men.* *Some* truſt in Chariots & ſome in Horſemen, but, be *aſhamed* O Iſrael, put *not* your confidence in *man*, that is a *worm*, or the *ſon* of man, whoſe *breath* is in his *noſtrils*, and *whereof* is he to be *accounted?* *Dependence* upon Miniſters is a *derogation* from the Lord of Glory, whoſe ap-
Pſal. 29. propriate and ſole *prerogative* 'tis, to *give ſtrength*
——27. *unto his people.* The *Lord* is their *light* and *life*, the ſword of their excellency, and the rock of
1*Cor.* 3. 5. their ſalvation. Who is *Paul*, and who is *Apollos*, but *Miniſters*, *by* whom ye believed, *according* as the *Lord gave* to ev'ry man? Ye are *his* building,
1*Cor.* 3. 9. *his* workmanſhip, *his* husbandry; *ſo then, neither*
——7. *is he that planteth, any thing, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increaſe.* *Inſtruments* muſt be own'd and honour'd in their *order* and
2*Cor.* 4. 1. due *meaſure.* *Let a man ſo account of them, as the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the myſteries of God.* They muſt not be *over-rated*, nor *under-valu'd.* There is a *great* and *juſt* reſpect to be paid their character. Unto *Chriſt* is due the glory of *efficiency*, but to *them* the honour of *inſtrumentality.* Chriſt is the *Maſter-builder*; they are

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Under-labourers, working together with God. They are then to *be eſteemed highly in love as ſuch.* But let people *take heed*, that their "*reſpect* do not degenerate into ſinful *admiration of men's perſons*", and a factious and dangerous partiality, *magnifying* this and *nullifying* that. *For while one ſaith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?* Let People learn then *not* to think of men *above* that which is written, *that no one---be puffed up for one againſt another.* "Rais'd expectations from man, may provoke God to blaſt the moſt promiſing mean's". 1 Cor. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 4. 1 Cor. 4. 6.

AGAIN, Hence, *Let Miniſters give Chriſt the glory of all that ſucceſs they meet with in their labours.* When the ſpiritual *Husbandman* takes a view of his field, and ſees the *full corn in the ear*, plants of renown, trees of righteouſneſs, and *principal wheat*, growing in the *good* ground, that *beareth fruit* to *perfection*, let *Chriſt* reap an *harveſt* of *glory* from him. Do the Goſpel *Fiſher-men* draw their net to the ſhore *full*, and gather of the *abundance* of the Seas? Then, let *Chriſt* have a tribute of honour, *without* whom, *they* might *toil all day and night and catch nothing.* Are any *built up an habitation of God?* Let *Chriſt* have the *rent*, and revenue, the profit and praiſe. At the laying of every *living ſtone* in the holy temple, let there be the ſhout of *Grace, Grace; and glory to God in the higheſt.* When the *word preach't* is the *miniſtration of Life*, and an odour of a ſweet ſmell, let Miniſters *beware* of *burning incenſe* to *themſelves*. Mat. 13. Iſai. 28. 25. —61. 3

THE *Apoſtle* was peculiarly *tender* of the honour of *Chriſt* in *this* point. He took all occaſions to *magnify* and exalt *the Grace of God which was given to him*, yea at the *very* time, he is giving an *account* of his *own* ſervices and ſucceſſes, and *vindicating* himſelf from the aſperſions of malice and envy

envy, he takes infinite *care* always to ſecure unto the *divine power and bleſſing* the *intire glory*, & with the moſt profound humility, ſinks *himſelf* to the *duſt* under a view of his own nothingneſs. *I am become* (ſays he) *a fool in glorying, ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you, for in nothing am I behind the very chief of the Apoſtles, tho' I am nothing. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was beſtowed upon me, was not in vain; but I labour'd more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

2 Cor. 12.

THE humble *temper & ſpirit* of this great Apoſtle wou'd well become every Goſpel-Miniſter. *Let none boaſt or ſo much as begin to commend themſelves.* Shall the *pen* boaſt itſelf againſt the *Writer?* or the *ax* againſt *him* that *heweth* therewith? or ſhall the *ſaw* magnify itſelf againſt *him* that *ſaweth it?* as if the *ſtaff* ſhou'd lift up itſelf, as if 'twere no wood.

2 Cor. 3. Iſai. 10. 15.

THE *moſt divine* Preacher is but an *Inſtrument*: the excellency of the *power* is of Chriſt, and therefore the excellency of *dignity*, and the *praiſe* of all is owing to Him.

LET *Miniſters* then *aſcribe* unto *Him* the *glory* that's *due* unto him, *ſing forth* the *honour of his name*, *praiſe and make his name glorious. Aſcribe ye ſtrength unto him, whoſe excellency is over Iſrael, and his power and glory are ſeen in the ſanctuary. He is terrible out of his holy places; the God of Iſrael is he that prepareth mercy & truth for his people, and makes his miniſters a flame of fire. Great* is the Lord & *greatly* to be *praiſed in the city of our God*, in the mountain of his *holineſs*. When therefore Miniſters *fight the battels of the Lord*, and *their arrows are made ſharp in the hearts of the King's enemies*, let them *return* to the *mount* to *meet the Lord* with the *high praiſes* of God

Pſal 68. 34, 35

Pſal. 45.

God in their mouth. They must not upon any
victorious atchievement divide the spoil, they must
not divide the glory, nor crown themselves with the
laurel, yea if by their own holiness or power they have Act. 3. 12.
done this thing, boasting of a false gift, and seek- Prov 25. 14
ing up a reputation to their own dexterity, parts or pains, no, but let them cast their
crowns at the feet of Christ, and erect a monu-
mental pillar for a memorial of gratitude, making
their boast in him alone, according as it is 2 Co. 10. 17
written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, upon
every signal instance of happy success, raising
the highest notes of doxology to the exalted Re-
deemer, and of thankful triumph over the conquest
of darkness, bringing to the humble tune of
Psal. 115. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory. Neither by how much Hos. 1. 7.
neither by horses, nor by horsemen, neither by
might, nor multitude, but by the spirit of the living God 2 Cor. 3. 3.
right hand and holy arm hath he gotten unto himself victory Psal. 98. 1.
but have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told
us the noble acts that thou didst in their days, in the
times of old, thou didst drive out the heathen with thy
hand, and the Lord builds the walls of Zion, and
saves and the glory. In all these things, wherein we Rom. 8. 37.
are more than conquerors through him that loved us, blessed be 2 Cor. 2. 14.
God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and
manifests the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

THUS I've run over the general Observations
that lay in the text, and given some general hints of
the copious Subject, I'd confess, I've gone but
little way in so wide a field, yet I've taken
care a compass that you may have a comprehensive
view of the whole, and draw near to the Lord
Jesus by it. Upon the whole, how
great the danger of unfaithfulness, and how dreadful
the Pastoral Curse is, how then should
we be affected with the weighty and important
work we are engaged in, or are entering upon? If any

than desire the office of a Minister, *he desireth a* g
work—but *verily* a work, that calls for *super*
skill, dexterity & acuteness; for *extraordinary force* an
stadness of mind, for *much care, dispatch & exp*
dition, with the *most wakeful unfainting applicatio*
And if here we *subjoyn* the consideration of *th*
own impotency & *deficiency*, with the *difficulties* th
meet with from the lusts & exorbitant passion
the adamantine & unmalleable tempers of som
Leviathan-Rebels, and from the fiery rage of th
infernal Host; and " many *other* circumstances
discouragement they are unavoidably under; wi
the *sadness* of that awful *account* they are
long to give up to the chief Shepherd, &c. Here
eno' to *disanimate* and *appale* the stoutest and mo
puissant of *mere* Mortals. The *Ministry* is jus
called *magnum opus, sed gravis sarcina*, a great wo
but yet an *heavy* burden, a station of *honour*, b
yet a post of the most *difficult services*, and c
never be maintained & discharged without *extr*
guishing aids and uncommon supplies from abo
SUCH, as *engage* in this sacred and solemn wo
should *well weigh*, what an *insupportable* burd
they take upon their Shoulders,—*to keep them bl*
ble; and the *People* also should duly *consider* it,—
keep them *from adding to the Load*. Serious
flections on *this* should *bias* them to christia
tenderness, and move the bowels of holy *compass*
The *difficulty & weight* of Ministers work & dut
speak 'em the *just objects of pity*, and shou
teach *people* to *speak comfortably* to *them*, that tea
the good knowlege of the Lord. It is very
kind and *ingenerous* in people (*not* to call it th
most *savage barbarity*) that will mightily *infla*
their *accounts* in the day of reckoning) to *clog*
and *embarass* faithful Ministers in their work b
the swelling waves of gainsaying and head

Corahism

Pharisism, (insolently and insultingly rising up against them, as if they *took too much* upon 'em) by *cruel mockings*, rancour and humourſome carriage, by ſhameleſs *Chamiſm*, uncovering their nakedneſs, and expoſing their frailties, by *entertaining* or *ſpreading groundleſs* jealouſies, by *rash* cenſures, and *unfair* comments, and criticiſms on their words or actions, proceedings, or preaching, by ſelfiſh *contraction* of ſpirit, and cloſe-handed *niggardlineſs* in the *maintenance* of them—the blackeſt inſtance of *unchariſtableneſs*, not to call it the moſt abominable *injuſtice*, and *ſacrilegious* impiety. *Theſe* things, and the *like*, *wound* and ſink their ſpirits, enfeeble their hands, hamper their feet, and take off their chariot-wheels, that they drive on heavily; and *watch for Souls*, *not with joy but with grief*, *which* (ſays the Apoſtle to the Hebrews) *is unprofitable for you*. *Mal.* 3. 8. 1 *Cor.* 9. 14. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17 *Gal.* 6. 6. *Heb.* 13. 17.

I *ſpeak not* theſe things under any *ſuſpicion*, or fear of meeting with *ſuch* unhappy treatment from *that kind & religious* People, among whom the *Lots are fallen*, and *this* grace given to *me* (how-ever unworthy) *that I ſhould preach the unſearchable riches of Chriſt*. The great and obliging reſpect, honour & juſt veneration they've paid unto the *many excellent Worthies*, that *here* miniſtred unto them in holy things, is a good aſſurance of the *forwardneſs of their mind*. And the *moſt becoming magnanimity* in the *choice* they made of *ſo unfit a perſon as my ſelf*, was what render'd it peculiarly *encouraging*; that I flatter my ſelf it *looks like* a comfortable omen, and a deſirable *prelude* to mutual happineſs, *furtherance*, and *joy of faith* under the divine bleſſing, and *thro' the ſupplies of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt*. 2 *Cor.* 9. 2.

I *rejoyce therefore*, *Brethren*, *that I've confidence in you in all things*. And I *thank God* upon every remembrance 2 *Cor.* 7. 16. *Phil.* 1.

remembrance of you, making request for you
with joy, from the first day until now. And fro
my inward affection more abundantly towards you, t
I pray, that your love may abound yet more a
more in knowledge, and in all judgment, a
that in all things ye may approve your selv
clear in this matter, keeping a conscience void
offence both toward God, and toward them, th
2 Cor. 4. 5. are your servants for Jesus-sake.

NEVERTHELESS, lest haply I (that I say not yo
be ashamed in this same confident boasting, I thot it n
superfluous to exhort you Brethren, as touching t
administration of this service, and to stir up your pu
2 Pet. 3. 1. minds by way of remembrance and caution, tho ye
——1. 12. established in the present truth, that ye may be minde
of the words, which were spoken before by the holy P
phets, and of the commandment of the Apostles: Ho
they said, Obey them that have the rule over you, a
submit your selves; know them that admonish you, a
esteem them highly in love for their works sake. Fu
thermore then we beseech you, Brethren, and exho
1 Thes. 4. 1. you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received---ho
ye ought to walk---so ye would abound more and mo
Let them that labour among you experience you
candour, pity and kind assistence at all times and i
all things. Do all you can to alleviate their bu
dens, and by all possible means endeavour t
hearten and comfort them. Lend a hand t
strengthen and further them in their work. Ca
the mantle of christian charity over the multitud
of their weaknesses and defects; Be not too se
vere in animadverting on them at any time, bu
make all ingenuous allowances for their imper
fections: always put the fairest glosis upon thei
speech and behaviour. "Remember (says one)
they are earthen vessels, and your own too, & tak
heed you don't throw em to the ground", an

them to pieces presently upon spying a fit-
ness. *Let your moderation be known unto all men;*
approve your selves peaceable and faithful among the 1 *Pet.* 2. 1.
tribes of Israel: and *laying aside all malice, and all*
evil-speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk, —*ver.* 2.
the word, that ye may grow thereby. Let your
profiting appear to all; Let them that toil in the
garden of Christ see in *you* the *fruit* of their la-
bours: *this* will turn to *your* Salvation, and take
off from the difficulty of *their* task: hereby *you*
will be *benefitted* and *they* will be *supported* and en-
couraged, and go on with *alacrity* over their wea-
risome stage of duty.

AND *to all this* fail not to *add* your most im-
portunate *intercessions* for them at the throne of
grace. So great an *Apostle* as *Paul* the aged, fur-
nished with large abilities, extraordinary gifts,
and distinguishing grace, was often requesting
the favour, under an humble sense of his ne- 1 *Thes.* 5. 25
cessity, of an interest in the *Prayers* of the 2 *Thes.* 3. 1.
Saints. And it *becomes ordinary* Ministers *much* *Heb.* 13. 18
more to *importune* their People *herefor*, and it migh-
tily *behoves* People to *grant* their request. This
is a *debt* of service as well as a *tribute* of respect
owing to their *Ministers*, and at the same time an
act of charity, and a *deed of kindness* to *themselves*.
A *praying* People (says one) is the most *hope-*
ful means to make a *profitable* Ministry". *The* *Ja.* 5. 16.
fervent prayers of the righteous avail much. These
auxiliary forces are mightily *serviceable* to *Mini-*
sters in *pulling down* the strong holds of Satan, and
in building up the temple of God. *Helping toge-* 2 *Cor.* 1. 11.
ther by prayer for us, said the Apostle.

LET then *what has been said* engage and per-
suade *all* the *People* of God, to *keep up* a spirit of
supplication for *those* that *wait at the altar*. The
Chief-Priest, and Master-workman *needs* the help
and

and benefit of your Prayers, as well the *inferior Levites & meaner Servants*; among *whom* your unworthy *Monitor* this day, humbly & earnestly begs (as he greatly needs) a *peculiar share* in your most solemn addresses.

BUT *more particularly*, I wou'd recommend my self to the *constant*, and most *fervent* Prayers (1) Of my *Reverend FATHER*, (who, *having obtained help from God*, yet survives *in this ministry received of the Lord*, with whom I am now (tho' *most unworthy*) to be set apart an *Helper unto the kingdom of God*, and *with whom* by divine grace, I shall *gladly* serve, as a *Son* with a *Father* in the *Gospel*) and also of my *beloved BRETHEREN*, the People of *this* Flock, over *whom* I am *awfully* now to be set a *Watch-man in the Lord*. *Now, I beseech you for the love of the Spirit, and by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him*, that ye *strive* together with me, and wrestle in your Prayers to the great Master of the Assembly for *me*: and *continue* herein *labouring fervently*, with unceasing ardours of holy importunity; *praying* that I may be *furnished* with suitable *gifts* to make me *wise to win Souls*, and with *grace sufficient* to make me *faithful*: *that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God in the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace*; that the *power of Christ* and a *double portion* of his *Spirit* may *rest* upon me, and that thro' Christ strengthning of me, I may *take heed* to the *Ministry* to *fulfil* it: that *my lips may be touched with a coal from off the Altar, that the opening of my mouth may be of right things, which become sound doctrine*: that the *Refiners fire* may *purge away* the dross of *earthly* affections, and the *fullers soap* make me *clean to bear the Vessels of the Lord*; that I may be *strong in the grace, which is in Christ Jesus*; and *so take heed to my self, that*

Phil. 3. 22.

Rom 15. 30

when I've preached to others, I my ſelf may not be *a Caſtaway*; that it may not be my unhappy Lot to ſerve only to light *others* to Heaven, and be *my ſelf* at laſt abandoned to *utter darkneſs*; but that I may me *taught* of the Lord, *how to behave my ſelf in the houſe of God, which is the church of the living God*, and how to behave my ſelf, in *word, in converſation, in charity, in faith, in purity*, worſhipping God in the *ſpirit* and in *truth*, ſerving him in the ſpirit and power of godlineſs, with humility, and fidelity, *watching for Souls, as one that muſt give an account*, that I may *ſave my ſelf, and them that hear me*; that I may have a *nail in the holy place*, and may *with you be comforted*, when the *times of refreſhment ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.*

LET this be your *hearts deſire, and prayer to God* for me. Now, the God of Peace be with you all.

AMEN.

when I've preached to others, I my self may not be a Cast-away; that it may not be my unhappy Lot to serve only to light others to Heaven, and be my self at last abandoned to utter darkness: but that I may me truely of the Lord, how to behave my self in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, and how to behave my self, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity, worshipping God in the spirit and in truth, serving him in the spirit and power of godliness, with humility, and fidelity, watching for Souls, as one that must give an account, that I may save my self, and them that hear me: that I may have a mind in the holy place, and may with joy be counted, when the times of refreshment shall come from the presence of the Lord.

9 MY 72

LET this be your constant desire, and prayer to God for me. Now, the God of Peace be with you all.

AMEN.